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Daily Report
Near East & South Asia

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CONTENTS

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INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Islamic Affairs

OIC Foreign Ministers Forum Begins in Guinea *[Tehran Radio]* 1
Iraq's al-Sahhaf Arrives for OIC Forum *[Baghdad TV]* 1
Ministers, Officials Speak at OIC Conference 1
Iran's Velayati on New Challenges *[IRNA]* 1
Algabid Calls For End to Israeli Settlements *[SPA]* 4
Syria's al-Shar' Urges Solidarity *[Damascus Radio]* 4
Egypt's al-Masri Denounces Violence *[Cairo Radio]* 5
UAE Official Calls For Dialogue *[WAKH]* 6
Pakistan's Ali Condemns India *[Islamabad Radio]* 6
Guinea's Conte Stresses Kashmir Issue *[Islamabad Radio]* 6
Conference Attendees Hold Sideline Meetings 7
Velayati Meets OIC Leader, Ministers *[IRNA]* 7
Velayati, Qatari Minister Discuss Cooperation *[IRNA]* 7
Al-Shar', Sudan Minister Discuss Peace *[Damascus Radio]* 7

Palestinian Affairs

'Arafat Receives UN Delegation in Gaza *[Jericho VOP]* 8
'Arafat's Representative Arrives in Tulkarm *[Jericho VOP]* 8
Authority Takes Over Tulkarm After Israeli Pullout *[Jericho VOP]* 8
Abu-Rudaynah on Elections, 'Arafat Talks *[Amman Radio]* 8
Nominations Postponed To Allow for Broader Dialogue *[Jericho VOP]* 9
Spokesman: Gaza PFLP May Ignore Election Boycott *[THE JERUSALEM POST 8 Dec]* 9
Gaza Civil Rights Activist To Run for PA Presidency *[HA'ARETZ 10 Dec]* 9
Security Forces Advance Team Arrives in Hebron *[Jericho VOP]* 10
Negotiators Agree To Build Gaza-West Bank Bridge *[Jericho VOP]* 10
Police Chief on Security Effort, Cooperation *[MENA]* 10
Extent of Palestinian, Israeli Extremist Ties Revealed *[Jericho VOP]* 11
Hamas Spokesman: Invitation to Talks With PLO Awaited *[AFP]* 11
Islamic Jihad Members Vow Continued Struggle *[Voice of the Oppressed]* 11

Arab-Israeli Talks

'Arafat, Peres Discuss Redeployment, Prisoners *[Jerusalem Radio]* 12
Agree on Release of 1,000 Prisoners *[Jericho VOP]* 12
'Arafat Discusses Prisoners With Israeli Arabs *[Jericho VOP]* 13

ARAB AFRICA

Algeria

Dembri Sees Problems in Relations With France *[Algiers TV]* 14
Dembri Protests UN Move on Western Sahara Elections *[Algiers TV]* 14
Western Sahara Envoy Denounces UN Election Plan *[Algiers Radio]* 14

Presidency Source Denies Contacts With FIS *[Algiers Radio]* 14
FIS Blames Armed Islamic Group for Imam's Death *[Paris International]* 14
Daily Newspaper Suspended; Director Arrested *[Paris Internatioanl]* 15
TV Technician Attacked by 'Armed Group' *[Algiers TV]* 15
Security Services Kill 37 'Criminals' *[Algiers Radio]* 15

Egypt

Musa Returns From London Bosnia Conference, Comments *[MENA]* 15
Further on Musa Comments *[MENA]* 15
Musa Discusses Peace Process, Regional Issues *[MENA]* 16
Rights Group Says Government Rigged Elections *[AFP]* 17
Rights Group Reports 51 Killed in Election Violence *[AFP]* 18
Opposition Calls For Dissolution of New Parliament *[AFP]* 18
Holds News Conference on Elections *[MENA]* 19
Prosecutors Seek Death Sentences for 2 'Militants' *[AFP]* 19
Ethiopia To Reveal Evidence on Assassination Attempt *[MENA]* 19
Concern Over Iraq-Egypt Developments Reported *[London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI 7 Dec]* 20
'Islamic Group' Threatens Pakistan With Hijackings *[MENA]* 21

Libya

Official Source Denies Visit of Iranian Official *[JANA]* 21
JANA Notes Disappointment With GCC Summit 21

Mauritania

Pro-Iraq Activists Receive Prison Sentences *[Libreville Radio]* 22

Morocco

Iraqi Embassy Warned Against 'Expanding Activities' *[Voice of Iraqi People]* 22
EFTA Accord To Establish Free Trade Area *[MAP]* 22

Sudan

Al-Bashir on Uganda, Arab Ties, Mideast Peace *[AL-DUSTUR 10 Dec]* 23
Iranian Military Delegation Pays Visit *[AL-WAFD 3 Dec]* 24
Defense Minister Hassan on Arab League Charter *[Omdurman Radio]* 24
Foreign Minister Seeks Improved Ties With Kuwait *[Omdurman Radio]* 25
Al-Bashir Attends Popular Defense Forces Ceremony *[Omdurman Radio]* 25
Al-Bashir Urges Youth To Join Popular Defense Forces *[Omdurman Radio]* 25
Al-Bashir: Nation Has Overcome Internal Differences *[Omdurman Radio]* 26
Government Accused of Chemical Weapons Attacks *[AL-WAFD 3 Dec]* 26
Minister: Armed Forces Control Area of Operations *[Omdurman Radio]* 26
Official Denies Rebels Control Kapoeta Province *[Omdurman Radio]* 26
National Congress To Convene 1 Jan *[Omdurman Radio]* 26

Western Sahara

Polisario Rejects UN Measures on Electoral Lists *[Algiers Radio]* 27
Warns Will 'Reconsider' Commitment to Peace *[Algiers Radio]* 27

ARABIAN PENINSULA

Qatar

Government Steps Up 'Dispute' With GCC States 28

Hints at Suspension of Membership *[London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI 8 Dec]* 28
Says No Decision Yet on Membership *[Doha Radio]* 28
To Boycott Meetings Attended by Saudi *[Paris Radio Monte Carlo]* 29
Minister Says Saudi Border Issue 'Almost Over' *[AL-YAWM 6 Dec]* 29

Saudi Arabia

Crown Prince Assesses Outcome of GCC Summit *[Riyadh Radio]* 29
Outcome of GCC Summit, Agreement Viewed *[Riyadh Radio]* 29
Magazine Praises Results of GCC Summit *[SPA]* 30
Gulf Urged 'Solidarity To Counter Iranian Plots' *[AFP]* 30
Paper: Islands To Stay Arab 'Despite Iranian Arrogance' *[AFP]* 30

Yemen

Ruling Coalition 'Crisis' Reportedly Continues 31
Minister of Trade Resigns *[AFP]* 31
'Dispute' Seen Escalating *[MENA]* 31
President, Higher Election Committee Hold Meeting *[Sanaa Radio]* 32
Salih Threatens Early Elections *[Damascus Radio]* 32

IRAQ

Husayn Kamil Proposes 'Draft Plan of Action' 33
Says Plan Aims at 'Rescuing Iraq' *[Voice of Iraqi People]* 33
Distributes 'Manifesto' to Opposition Groups *[AFP]* 33
Oppositionist on Husayn Kamil's 'Plan of Action' *[Tehran International]* 33
Sunni, Shiite Oppositionists Oppose Federation Plan *[London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 8 Dec]* 34
Details of Husayn Kamil Defection Revealed *[Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI 10 Nov]* 34
Arab Police Bureau Requests Arrest of Husayn Kamil *[MENA]* 36
'Source' Denies Report on Smuggling Operation *[Baghdad TV]* 37
Says CIA Said Behind Operation *[INA]* 38
AL-THAWRAH Says GCC Statement 'Astonishing' *[INA]* 38
Reportage on Bombing in Shaqlawah Continues 39
Opposition: Bomb Came From Baghdad *[SPA]* 39
Casualties Updated *[London TV]* 39
Barzani's Party Issues Statement *[Voice of Iraqi Kurdistan]* 39
Ministry To Issue 'Electronic' Ration Cards for 1996 *[AL-'IRAQ 28 Nov]* 40
Food Rations Detailed *[AL-'IRAQ 29 Nov]* 40

ISRAEL

Peres on Cabinet Politics, Talks With Clinton *[YEDI'OT AHARONOT 8 Dec]* 41
Peres' Agenda for Clinton Meeting Previewed 43
To Discuss Golan Pullout *[AFP]* 43
To Present Detailed Syria Proposals *[Jerusalem TV]* 44
To Seek Clinton Shuttle Mission *[Jerusalem TV]* 44
Not To Encourage Defense Pact Idea *[YEDI'OT ARHARONOT 10 Dec]* 45
To Ask CIA To Restrict Satellite Sales *[HA'ARETZ 10 Dec]* 45
To Seek Approval for Sale of Weapons *[Jerusalem Radio]* 45
Paper: Peres To Urge Clinton To Back Off on Syria *[YEDI'OT AHARONOT 10 Dec]* 46
Defense Pact With U.S. Seen as Timely Idea *[THE JERUSALEM POST 8 Dec]* 46
Need for Defense Pact With U.S. Questioned *[THE JERUSALEM POST 8 Dec]* 47
Writer Warns Against Strategic Pact With U.S. *[DAVAR RISHON 7 Dec]* 48
Criticism of Ross Said for Domestic Purposes *[MA'ARIV 11 Dec]* 49

Rabin Reportedly Gave Clinton Promise on Golan *[Jerusalem TV]* 50
Bureau Denies Rabin Promise *[Jerusalem Radio]* 51
Beilin Comments on Rabin Proposal *[Tel Aviv Radio]* 51
Peres To Inform Knesset 'Price' for Syrian Peace *[Jerusalem Radio]* 52
More Peres Comments on Price of Peace *[Jerusalem Radio]* 52
Peres on Syria, Palestinians, Talks With NRP *[Tel Aviv Radio]* 53
Syria Said To Drop 'Ultimatum' on Warning Stations *[Jerusalem Radio]* 57
Shahaq: Golan Heights 'Irreplaceable' in Wartime *[Jerusalem Radio]* 57
Merom Calls For '2nd Camp David,' End to Shuttle *[Jerusalem Radio]* 57
Netanyahu on Peace With Syria, U.S. Pact *[Jerusalem Radio]* 57
Peres Sees End of 'Rule' in Territories in 3 Weeks *[Jerusalem Radio]* 58
Sarid on Palestinian State, Golan Withdrawal *[Jerusalem Radio]* 59
Shahal: No Alternative to Separation From Palestinians *[Jerusalem Radio]* 59
Settlers Riot in Hebron; Police Investigating *[Jerusalem Radio]* 59
Nabulus Resident Killed by IDF Gunfire *[Jerusalem Radio]* 59
Canadian Businessman Funding 'Amir Defense Named *[Jerusalem Radio]* 59

JORDAN

Iranian Diplomat Expelled for Inciting Attacks *[AFP]* 60
Paper Reports on Expulsion *[AL-RA'Y 10 Dec]* 60
Iran Approves Appointment of Ambassador *[AL-DUSTUR 10 Dec]* 60
Seizure of Iraq-Bound Missile Parts Confirmed *[JORDAN TIMES 9 Dec]* 60
Minister Confirms Weapons Confiscated *[Amman Radio]* 61
Al-Kabariti on Meeting To Debate Iraq's Future *[AFP]* 61
Sources Cited on Iraqi Opposition Conference *[AL-MASHRIQ 18 Dec]* 62
Saddam's Daughters Called 'Virtual Captives' *[London THE SUNDAY TIMES 10 Dec]* 62
Al-Kabariti on Gulf Ties, Iraq, Peace Process *[Amman Radio]* 63
JEA Head Arrested for Criticizing King in Lectures *[Paris Radio Monte Carlo]* 63
Charged With 'Maligning' King, 'Sedition' *[AL-RA'Y 10 Dec]* 63
JEA Calls For 'Immediate Release' *[AL-RA'Y 10 Dec]* 64
Islamic Action Front Regrets Arrest *[MENA]* 64
Justice Minister Speaks to Deputies *[JORDAN TIMES 10 Dec]* 64
Associations Join To Defend Shubaylat *[JORDAN TIMES 11 Dec]* 65
Shubaylat Sentenced to Death in 1992 *[Paris Radio Monte Carlo]* 66
Muslim Militant Pleads Not Guilty to Slander *[JORDAN TIMES 10 Dec]* 66

LEBANON

Buwayz Discusses Peace, Barcelona Conference *[Voice of Lebanon]* 68
Prime Minister al-Hariri Comments on Peace 68
Says Country 'Ready for Peace' *[Beirut Radio]* 68
Stresses Stance on 'Just' Peace *[Beirut Radio]* 68
Sixth Shipment of U.S. Weapons Arrives *[Beirut Radio]* 69
UNIFIL Protests Wounding of Norwegian Troops *[Jerusalem Radio]* 69
Cuban Deputy Prime Minister Begins Official Visit *[Beirut Radio]* 69
Hizballah: No Security Guarantees for Israel *[Voice of the Oppressed]* 69
Israeli Demand for Early Warning Station Rejected *[Beirut Radio]* 69
Israeli Overflights, Bombardment Noted *[Beirut Radio]* 69

SYRIA

Israel's 'Frank' Commitment to Withdrawal Urged *[Damascus Radio]* 71
Radio: Successful Talks Need 'Different' Israeli Position *[Damascus Radio]* 71
Damascus 'Cautiously Optimistic' on Peres Proposals *[Damascus Radio]* 72

Clinton-Peres Meeting, U.S. 'Commitments' Viewed *[SANA]* 73
Possible Outcome of Talks Viewed *[Damascus Radio]* 73
Peres' Remarks on 'Price' for Syrian Peace Viewed *[Damascus Radio]* 74
Radio: 'Positive Statements' Not Enough To Make Peace *[Damascus Radio]* 75
Muslim Brotherhood Former Chief Pardoned, Returns *[Paris Radio Monte Carlo]* 75
Sudanese Minister Arrives With Message for al-Asad *[Damascus Radio]* 76
Ba'th Party Officials, Governors Hold Meeting *[AL-BA'TH 2 Nov]* 76

SOUTH ASIA

Afghanistan

Madera Office Closure Shows Pakistan 'Hostility' *[Kabul Radio]* 78
Kabul Accuses Pakistan of Interfering in Affairs *[Tehran International]* 78
Pakistan Opening of Jalalabad Embassy Denounced *[Kabul Radio]* 78
'Very Intense' Battle Reported Near Kabul *[AFP]* 78
'Bhutto's Taleban' Fires Rockets at Kabul *[Kabul Radio]* 79
'Diplomatic Areas' Hit *[IRNA]* 79
Fire Ensues at Closed UK Embassy *[Tehran International]* 79
Government Forces Bomb Taleban Positions *[Tehran Radio]* 79
Launch 'Massive Attack' *[AFP]* 80

Bangladesh

Parties Reiterate Call for Government Resignation *[Dhaka Radio]* 80
'Free, Fair and Impartial' Elections Stressed *[Dhaka Radio]* 80
Strike Called by Opposition; First Day Peaceful *[Dhaka Radio]* 80
'Sporadic Clashes' on Second Day *[Dhaka Radio]* 81
Amnesty Offered to Holders of Illegal Arms *[Dhaka Radio]* 81
Bomb Blasts Reported in Defiance of Weapons Ban *[AFP]* 81

India

Army: Al-Faran 'Presumably Abandoned' Hostages *[AFP]* 82
Villagers Reportedly Sight Hostages *[AFP]* 83
Army Denies Hostages in Custody *[AFP]* 83
Leader of 'Militant' Al-Faran Group Killed *[Dehli Radio]* 84
National Conference Head Attacked by Youth *[Delhi Radio]* 84
'Moslem Militants' Wound Kashmiri Journalist *[AFP]* 84

Iran

Jordanian Diplomat in Tehran Reportedly Expelled *[IRNA]* 84
Navy Chief: Ready for '80-Year War' for Islands *[AFP]* 84
GCC 'Posturing' on Gulf Islands Issue Derided *[Tehran International]* 85
Minister Va'ezi Urges Cooperation on Caspian *[IRNA]* 86
Plane Makes Emergency Landing With Bomb Threat *[IRNA]* 86
Plane From UAE Lands After Alert *[AFP]* 87
Plane Leaves After Search *[WAKH]* 87
Va'ezi Discusses Tajikistan With Russian Envoy *[IRNA]* 87
Commentary on Dispatch of U.S. Troops to Bosnia *[Tehran International]* 88
Radio Discusses U.S. Interest in Bosnian Peace *[Tehran Radio]* 88
Radio Discusses International Conference on Bosnia *[Tehran International]* 89
Human Rights Seen as 'Weapon' in Western Hands *[Tehran Radio]* 89
Khamene'i Addresses University Students in Qom *[Tehran Radio]* 90

Ayatollah Meshkini Delivers Qom Friday Sermons *[Tehran TV]* 91
Ayatollah Yazdi Delivers 'Second' Friday Prayers *[Tehran Radio]* 91

Pakistan

Egyptian Group Said Threatening Planes, Airports *[THE NATION 9 Dec]* 93
Egyptian Embassy Bomb Probe in 'Advanced Stage' *[THE NATION 10 Dec]* 94
Officials on Israel, U.S. 'Shift' on Kashmir *[THE NEWS 10 Dec]* 94
Bhutto Chairs 'High-Level' Meeting on Karachi *[Islamabad TV]* 95
MQM Leader's Relatives Killed in Karachi 95
Assailants Said Unknown *[Islamabad Radio]* 95
Further on Murder of Chief's Relatives *[THE NEWS 10 Dec]* 96
Strike Observed To Protest 'Brutal Killing' *[Islamabad Radio]* 97
MQM Chief Issues Statement on Killings *[MQM NEWS 9 Dec]* 97
Murders Said Due to 'State Terrorism' *[THE NEWS 10 Dec]* 97
MQM Letter Blames Government *[MQM NEWS 9 Dec]* 97
Government Condemns Killing *[Islamabad Radio]* 98
Bhutto Expresses 'Grief' *[Islamabad TV]* 98
Bhutto Views Karachi, Economy, Press Freedom *[Islamabad Radio]* 99
Sindh Government Orders Probe Into Karachi Deaths *[Islamabad TV]* 99
Babar Denies Government Behind Karachi Murder *[Islamabad Radio]* 100

Sri Lanka

President To Seek Political Solution to Crisis *[IRNA]* 100
President Sets Conditions for Talks With LTTE *[Colombo International]* 100
LTTE Rebels Commit Suicide After Jaffna Clash *[AFP]* 101
Radio on Suicide of Combatants *[LANKAPUVATH]* 101
LTTE Said Not Allowing Refugees To Return *[LANKAPUVATH]* 101
Police Commandos Launch New Offensive in East *[AFP]* 102
Further on 'Major Offensive' in East *[LANKAPUVATH]* 102
Official on Military Campaign To Destroy LTTE *[DAILY NEWS 11 Dec]* 103

Islamic Affairs

OIC Foreign Ministers Forum Begins in Guinea

LD0912121295 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 9 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The 23d Organization of Islamic Conference [OIC] Foreign Ministers Forum got under way this morning, local time, at the Presidential Palace in Conakry, Guinea. Our special correspondent reports:

[Begin unidentified correspondent recording] At the opening session, the [OIC] chairmanship was formally handed over to Guinea Foreign Minister Kozo Zomanigui. [passage omitted]

The draft agenda for the conference had been approved, with the exception of two points, at last month's OIC experts' meeting in Jiddah. The two points, which will be discussed at the ministerial conference, are: Iraq's request to change the name and content of the Special [OIC] Resolution on Iraq's invasion of Kuwait and Libya's efforts to gain the support of Islamic states to lift U.S. sanctions against it.

Developments in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the methods for Islamic states to participate in the reconstruction of that country, Afghanistan, Palestine and issues from the world of Islam are the main items on the agenda of the 23d OIC Foreign Ministers' Forum during the next few days. This is the special correspondent of the Voice and Vision of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Conakry, Guinea. [end recording]

It is worth noting that our country's Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati, is attending the conference heading a senior political delegation.

Iraq's al-Sahhaf Arrives for OIC Forum

JN0912191295 Baghdad Iraq Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 9 Dec 95

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf arrived in the Guinean capital city of Conakry yesterday to attend meetings of the Organization of Islamic Conference [OIC] foreign ministers, which began today.

During his stay in Conakry, the foreign minister will hold talks with his fraternal Arab and Islamic counterparts on the ways to promote Iraq's ties with their countries and bolster the efforts under way to expedite a revocation of the unfair sanctions clamped on Iraq.

The minister will also discuss with his Arab and Islamic interlocutors the best ways to coordinate stands on the topics listed on the agenda of the conference in order to promote the joint interests of Islamic states and enhance solidarity among them.

Ministers, Officials Speak at OIC Conference

Iran's Velayati on New Challenges

LD1012123495 Tehran IRNA in English 0846 GMT 10 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Conakry, Guinea, Dec. 10, IRNA — Iran's Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati stressed here that after 25 years, the OIC [Organization of the Islamic Conference] is at the threshold of a new era in its activities, an era that is quite distinct from the previous one and embodying new challenges and opportunities.

Addressing the 23rd meeting of OIC foreign ministers Friday night, he said, "the persistence of our adversaries to achieve, at any cost, their illegitimate objectives as well as the uncertainty of the Islamic states of their real weight and stature in world affairs, have precluded the organization from embarking upon a serious, goal-oriented and sustainable endeavor to attain its rightful place in the international scene."

He added that this situation created substantial impediments for the realization of acceptable results.

A sober assessment of prevailing international realities, coupled with assertive responses to these challenges and opportunities, can enhance the credibility of the organization in global affairs and solidify its position in the Islamic world, he noted.

In reality, he said, there is a dichotomy in today's global climate, which can bring about long-term gains for the Islamic world, while at same time presenting dangers which can threaten the current, and even future, Muslim generations.

In the past, Muslims faced clear cut political and ideological groupings that would have enabled them to identify their enemies and their tactics, he stressed.

Today however, recognizing the true nature and intention of our adversaries have become more complicated, Velayati said, underscoring that this is particularly true with the younger generations as the old adversaries have adopted new disguises, expanded their tactics and temporarily concealed their true animosity.

"They have wrapped their hostile intentions and covered conspiracies with a deceiving facade of good will in order to realize the same illegitimate objectives," he stated, adding, in this context, the enemies of Islam and Muslims continue to wage a misinformation campaign

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against some Islamic countries, exert every pressure to impose their culture on Muslim societies, while at the same time establishing an active presence in economic activities all over the Islamic world.

As the tacit and covert hostilities of our adversaries continue and persist, it is imperative for the Islamic world, and especially this organization, to maintain its vigilance and a unified front in facing the conspiratory moves of our adversaries, the foreign minister asserted.

"In these circumstances, placing our trust in their empty promises, while neglecting their traitorous pacts is unjustifiable and will have irreversible consequences for the entire ummah," he said.

"A large segment of the world population is subjected to daily waves of a deceitful misinformation campaign which is being orchestrated by the massive propaganda machine of well-known enemies of Islam," he noted, adding the intensity and persistence of this propaganda warfare is such that through the propagation of blatant lies, it attempts to misportray Islam, a divine religion and a glorious civilization, as a violent political ideology.

He underlined that the repetition of baseless distortions against Muslims, such as supporting terrorism, violating human rights, fundamentalism and extremism, have all created an international atmosphere wherein aggression against the beliefs and values of Muslims, desecration of Islamic sanctities, genocide against Muslims, massive violation of their rights, and unprecedented intolerance against Muslims and their values, are all simply neglected, and the victimization of Muslims is simply forgotten in the midst of massive baseless allegations.

Velayati stressed it is expected that with the finalization and implementation of the plan of action proposed by the expert group and initiation of open, frank and sustained dialogue between the Islamic world and the outside world, proper conditions would be provided for better appreciation of the sublime teachings of Islam by the rest of humanity.

He said that approval and implementation of the proposals of the first OIC symposium on the role of women in Islamic society, which was held in Tehran earlier this year, particularly the establishment of the international Islamic women's organization, as well as more vigorous efforts in the operation and institutionalization of the Cairo declaration on human rights in Islam, would contribute tremendously to a correct portrayal of Islam to the outside world.

Commenting on the importance of solidarity, the Iranian minister reiterated that the most central objective in the charter of the OIC is undoubtedly the strengthening of Islamic solidarity, pointing out that greater understanding and cooperation among Muslim states are two important factors for the attainment of this lofty goal.

Although complex ingredients, such as the destructive impact of outside powers and the imbedded mistrust between some Islamic countries, have rendered the achievement of this vital objective beyond reach, it cannot be contested that the OIC has the capability to minimize the conflicts and discord by concentrating on the rather extensive areas of commonality and mutual interest.

"The orientation of the organization towards addressing and analyzing the major impediments to Islamic solidarity, such as external interference, internal mistrust and lack of cultural and economic ties, will certainly contribute to the reversal of the current regretable predicament of Islamic societies and will energize our efforts for realization of our noble aspirations," he noted.

Velayati further said that the extensive efforts of Islamic countries in support of the victimized people of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina, which constituted a priority issue in the past few years, particularly the joint efforts spearheaded by the OIC Contact Group have seen relative success.

"Despite all these efforts and due to ulterior motives of certain powers, the international community has failed to properly address this human tragedy," he stated, adding in such an inconducive international climate and following the barbaric atrocities against and the untold suffering of Muslims, a peace agreement has been a step towards peace, by putting an end to bloodshed and the genocidal atrocities against the Bosnians.

Cognizant of the efforts to extract further concessions from the Muslim side in the course of negotiations for the implementation of the agreement, it is imperative that the OIC, through a collective participation of its Contact Group, be present in all the stages of the implementation process and in the course of future developments, he underlined.

"It is similarly necessary that Islamic countries continue their efforts for the reconstruction of the Bosnian military and the enhancement of its defensive capabilities in order to achieve a balance in the region. In the absence of such balance, the stronger side will once again be tempted to further violate the rights of the weaker side," Velayati noted.

"We firmly believe that the efforts of Islamic states, through the OIC Contact Group, must continue and be strengthened until all legitimate rights of Bosnian Muslims are restored and just and stable peace and tranquility are established in this region," he stressed.

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He said that the record of the organization in dealing with the question of Palestine, which is not only a central issue in its agenda, but also the very raison d'etre of the existence of the OIC, has indeed been discouraging, particularly in light of the recent decision by the U.S. Congress regarding holy al-Quds [Jerusalem].

"The lack of serious progress in this regard is another testimony to the necessity of closer and more action-oriented cooperation and coordination among Islamic countries," he said and added that the case of Bosnia can provide a good example to be replicated with regard to this vital issue of interest to the Islamic world, including within the framework of relevant organs, such as the al-Quds contact group.

Velayati stated that it is now an established fact that despite a propaganda facade, the expansionist policies of the Zionist entity, including its occupation of Muslim land, its attempt at changing the status of the holy al-Quds, its pursuit of official policy of state terrorism, torture of Palestinian prisoners and destruction and confiscation of their property continue unabated.

"Therefore," he commented, "the only real and lasting solution is the full restoration of all rights of the Palestinian people, return of all Palestinian refugees to their homeland and liberation of all occupied Muslim land."

Referring to situation in Afghanistan, he said the fratricidal war has escalated, and the number of civilian casualties and the extent of loss of resources has climbed, thus creating ever more impediments to the establishment of an all-inclusive government in that country.

The Islamic Republic of Iran, while expressing its deep regret at the continuation of this tragic situation, is of the firm view that the only solution is an immediate halt to the vicious cycle of fratricide, and the establishment of dialogue among all Afghan groups and parties, in order to reach a comprehensive and acceptable solution to resolve internal conflicts there, he added.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran, since the beginning of the crisis in Afghanistan has not failed to take any action in helping to settle the Afghan problem, providing humanitarian assistance, hosting millions of Afghan refugees, dispatching mediation teams and encouraging all fighting parties in Afghanistan to settle their differences through dialogue and negotiations," he stressed.

Velayati further expressed hope that through cooperation and follow up by the secretary-general as well as more active involvement of the OIC committee on Afghanistan, more practical steps can be taken in this regard.

In the same region, independence of countries of Central Asia and the popular will in these countries to regain their identity have been faced with many obstacles, prominent among which is internal discord, in Tajikistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran, cognizent of this reality, has done its utmost in keeping with the paramount interest of the people of Tajikistan, to facilitate the achievement of nation unity, the minister noted.

"In our view, continuation of political dialogue between the government and opposition groups is the only path to the realization of this objective, and hence we have exerted every effort in order to encourage and promote this dialogue," he said.

Commenting on the importance of economic situation in the Islamic states, Velayati noted that the Islamic states are still confronted with limited access to the appropriate technology of industrialized countries, insufficient finance of their national projects as a result of inefficient allocation of global financial resources by international financial institutions, heavy debt burden which has restrained their capabilities for development, decline in the price of their raw material exports, high degree of trade protectionism practiced by the north and unilateral actions by some developed countries.

"These impediments restrain mobilization of national resources and capabilities by member states and jeopardize their economic development," he underlined.

He said that the OIC consisting of fifty one states has tremendous capacity for economic development and should remove the existing impediments through extensive cooperation and coordination.

These economies with variant characteristics and dimensions could be supplementary in different aspects and may provide tremendous opportunities for strengthening economic relations among OIC member states, he said adding, but the inter-Islamic trade is still at primary stages and commercial relations among Islamic countries are limited by structural impediments.

Referring to the new plan of action endorsed by the OIC member states, Velayati said the affiliated organs and institutions of the OIC have taken necessary initiatives for designing of mechanisms which will promote and increase economic cooperation especially in the field of trade.

Different schemes were initiated, but the lion's share of Islamic countries' trade is still concentrated on the developed and industrialized countries, because these arrangements have not been extended and institutionalized among OIC member states, and the participation of the private sector as a supplementary factor has not been facilitated.

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He further underlined that inter-Islamic trade will be improved by increasing inter-Islamic investments by private sector and extensive cooperation among financial intermediaries in these countries.

"The Oic affiliated institutions could study and initiate mechanisms for promotion and guaranteeing of private sector investments such as portfolio investments and foreign direct investment in Islamic countries and recommend necessary steps for more cooperation among stock exchange markets and financial intermediaries of islamic countries," he stressed adding, member states should lend their support in this regard.

Another important issue for the OIC member states is the problem of food security and agricultural development, he noted, this problem still remains unresolved and it is one of the top priorities in many OIC member states.

The reduction of export subsidies and domestic supportive measures as a result of the Uruguay round agreements have increased the price of foodstuff and agricultural products, Velayati stated and added, slow pace of economic development, natural disasters and inappropriate weather conditions especially in the Popu Lous countries and major producers have increased pressure for higher prices of foodstuff in the international markets.

Unfortunately the agricultural trade of Islamic countries is characterized by a net imbalance in favor of imports and most Islamic countries were still experiencing this deficit especially in cereals, he regreted, suggesting economic, financial and technical aspects of this question should be covered and considered in a comprehensive manner.

The Islamic Republic of Iran hosted the fourth ministerial conference on food security and agricultural development, Velayati announced, the conference achieved fruitful results and examined and approved the proposal for the establishment of a standing committee for agricultural development with the objectives to promote agriculture and attain food security in OIC countries.

He said that the OIC countries through lending their support to this standing committee could establish a mechanism for comprehensive cooperation and coordination in this vital field.

The Iranian foreign minister concluded by hoping that the meeting would take effective steps toward resolution of the existing problems and toward greater solidarity of Muslim ummah.

Algabid Calls For End to Israeli Settlements

LD0912214395 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 2055 GMT 9 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Conakry, 9 Dec — Dr. Hamid Algabid, the secretary general of the Organization of Islamic Conference [OIC], has called on the international community and the peace conference co-sponsors to stop the wave of Israeli settlement in the occupied Palestinian territories, especially the city of Jerusalem.

In his address today to the conference of OIC foreign ministers he expressed the organization's regret over the U.S. Senate's decision to move the U.S. embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. Algabid has called upon the United States to reconsider this decision until the reaching of a settlement that is compatible with the principles of international legitimacy.

The OIC's secretary general has praised the progress achieved by the Palestinians on the road to establishing their independent state with Jerusalem as its capital.

Syria's al-Shar' Urges Solidarity

JN1012174195 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1615 GMT 10 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Conakry—[Syrian] Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' emphasized in a statement at the 23d conference of the foreign ministers of the Organization of Islamic Conference [OIC] states this morning that determining the positions of the Islamic states on basic issues is important. But even more important is to conduct a serious dialogue among these countries in order to reach a unified or close concept that defines the best means to deal with these issues and confront the challenges.

Al-Shar' said that the phrases of condemnation, denunciation, and hope which characterize the meetings of the OIC are something like diagnosing the illness while remaining puzzled and unable to prescribe the medicine.

The foreign minister said giving priority to selfish interests and narrow gains over solidarity and cooperation among Islamic states will continue to be a source of tension and conflict. He said the effectiveness of the resolutions and recommendations adopted by the OIC depends primarily on our ability and faith to commit ourselves to these resolutions.

Al-Shar' emphasized that defending the higher interests of our nation should not conflict with defending the higher interests of our countries. He said this requires a strong political will in the face of any external pressures or embarrassments, especially if these pressures and

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embarrassments encroach on national sovereignty and dignity.

He said: On this basis, we are aware why the OIC was unable to take the initiative or contribute effectively to prevent the shameful ethnic cleansing against the Bosnian people since its beginning.

He added: We can also be aware why the bloody fraternal fighting is continuing between the one Afghan people, and why we, as Islamic countries did not have a basic role in realizing a national reconciliation in Somalia and other Islamic states whose peoples suffer from violence, siege, or civil wars.

Al-Shar' said: After all this, we ask why the image of Islam is being distorted in the West, and why Israel ignores Arab and Islamic rights and rejects realizing a comprehensive and just peace based on its withdrawal from all occupied territories in accordance with the relevant Security Council resolutions—those resolutions which are supported by the whole international community and not only our Islamic countries.

Concluding his statement, the foreign minister said these many questions and other important questions have no satisfactory answers without realizing the solidarity among the Islamic states, unifying their positions, and realizing reconciliation and cooperation among them before seeking reconciliation and cooperation with the others. Al-Shar' stressed that this is a difficult path, but there is no alternative in order to realize the interests of our nation and peoples and the stability of our countries. Therefore, there should be a first step along this long path.

Speeches delivered by heads of delegations this morning supported the position of Syria and Lebanon in their efforts to realize a just and comprehensive peace in accordance with the relevant Security Council resolutions, and the withdrawal of Israel from all occupied territories, and secure the rights of the Palestinian people.

The speeches condemned the U.S. Congress decision to move the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem, and urged the United States to abandon this decision, which does not serve the peace process in the region.

Meanwhile, al-Shar' met with Iranian Foreign Minister Dr. 'Ali Akbar Velayati this morning on the sidelines of the OIC foreign ministers conference in Conakry. Talks dealt with developments in the region, in addition to the conference agenda topics.

Al-Shar' also met with Pakistani Foreign Minister Sardar Asif Ali and discussed the situation in the Indian subcontinent, and the issues and the draft resolutions on the agenda of the conference.

Al-Shar' met this afternoon with Tunisian Foreign Minister Habib Ben Yahia. Talks dealt with developments in the region and the topics on agenda of the conference, and bilateral relations.

Al-Shar' met with Ghazi Salah al-Din, Sudanese minister of state for foreign affairs in Conakry last night on the sidelines of the meetings of the foreign ministers of the OIC states.

Talks dealt with developments in the region, the peace process, and bilateral fraternal relations.

Egypt's al-Masri Denounces Violence

NC1012170495 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 10 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Egypt has emphasized that the renouncing of all forms, motives, and causes of violence lies in the essence of the tolerant Islamic religion. Any statement to the contrary, Egypt added, aims to undermine Islamic countries' international standing and curtail their great potential role in establishing a firm basis for international relations.

In its speech at the 23d session of the Organization of the Islamic Conference [OIC] foreign ministers in Conakry today, Egypt warned of extraneous manifestations that have spread in the Islamic world that have nothing to do with Islam. Such manifestations, Egypt added, threaten Islamic societies and warn of grave consequences if they are not stopped.

In its speech, delivered by Ambassador Sayyid al-Masri on behalf of Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa, Egypt said the worst and most dangerous of these manifestations is terrorism. The ambassador said that an Islamic initiative to hold an international conference to fight terrorism will deflect from Islam the false charges that some have sought to pin onto our tolerant religion. Such a conference, he added, will also be a genuine contribution to humanity to boost world cooperation to eliminate terrorism.

Ambassador Sayyid al-Masri stressed the need for coordination and cooperation among states in the exchange of information, judicial cooperation, and extradition of criminals.

Discussing the Middle East peace process, he emphasized that peace is an inseparable whole. He said efforts cannot succeed unless the process covers all the occupied territories in Palestine, the Syrian Golan, and south Lebanon.

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UAE Official Calls For Dialogue

JN1012180695 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1420 GMT 10 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Conakry, 10 Dec (WAKH)—The United Arab Emirates [UAE] has said that the best way of keeping the Gulf region away from the woes of previous events lies in confidence-building measures through dialogue and negotiations, as well as respect for international legitimacy, especially since the outcome of the conflicts and wars in the region over the past decade have confirmed that those parties which resorted to or threatened force have not achieve their ambitions in terms of changing the facts and the historical and geographical constants. On the contrary, they have demonstrated that these conflicts and wars have deepened existing differences and created crises. In this regard, the UAE welcomes all efforts and peaceful endeavors under way to demarcate borders among the fraternal states in the region.

In a speech to the Islamic foreign ministers' 23d conference today, Sayf Sa'id Bin-Sa'id, acting under secretary of the UAE Foreign Ministry, demanded that the Iraqi Government complement its fulfillment of its international commitments stipulated in the pertinent Security Council resolutions, particularly those related to releasing Kuwaiti and other POW's and detainees and returning the Kuwaiti property the Iraqi Government is still seizing.

Bin-Sa'id stressed the UAE's interest in Iraq's independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity, and in noninterference in internal Iraqi affairs. He also called for easing the suffering of the Iraqi people, who are being harmed by the international sanctions.

He said the concept of joint Islamic security needs to be developed so it will be in harmony with other concepts of joint security, particularly those affecting the member states in this region.

He also expressed satisfaction with the ongoing Middle East peace process and its positive developments. He asserted that the steps must be augmented later with substantive progress on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks in order to establishing a just and comprehensive peace based on Security Council Resolutions 242, 338, and 425, as well as on the land-for-peace principle and the restoral of all occupied Arab and Palestinian territories, including holy Jerusalem, the Syrian Golan, and southern Lebanon, as well as securing the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and establishment an independent state on Palestinian national soil with Jerusalem as its capital.

Pakistan's Ali Condemns India

BK1112070995 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 11 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali has urged the Islamic foreign ministers conference to reaffirm the complete solidarity of the Islamic community with the Kashmiri people, who are fighting the brutal Indian forces to achieve their right of self-determination. In his address to the conference at Conakry in Guinea yesterday, he lauded the efforts of the Organization of the Islamic Conference [OIC] Contact Group on Jammu and Kashmir for promoting better awareness about the situation in Kashmir and thanked the OIC secretary general for giving attention to the implementation of the Casablanca summit resolution on Kashmir.

The foreign minister said the rejection by India of the offer of the good offices of the Islamic summit and ministerial conferences indicates the contempt India has for Islam and its own Muslim minority. India has also not allowed an OIC fact-finding mission to visit occupied Kashmir. He said the Jammu and Kashmir dispute has created a serious threat to peace and security and increased tension in the region. He said India wants to impose a farcical political process on the Kashmiri people through its so-called elections, which have been vehemently rejected by the Kashmiris.

The Pakistani foreign minister urged the participants of the OIC foreign ministers conference to expose Indian crimes in occupied Kashmir, where over 600,000 Indian troops are committing murder, torture, arson, and rape to crush the freedom struggle of the Kashmiri people.

Sardar Asif Ali declared that Pakistan stands steadfastly with the Afghan people and desires to see peace and stability in this neighboring country through the efforts of the OIC and the United Nations.

Guinea's Conte Stresses Kashmir Issue

BK1012112095 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 10 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Guinea President Lansana Conte has said the Kashmir issue is a serious concern of the Organization of the Islamic Conference [OIC], and the organization is making efforts to find a just solution to the dispute. He said this while addressing the inaugural session of the meeting of foreign ministers of Islamic countries in Conakry, capital of Guinea. Expressing regret over fighting among Muslims, the Guinea president urged them to create a consensus to resolve the problems confronting the Islamic community.

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In his address, OIC Secretary General Dr. Hamid Algabid said Jammu and Kashmir is a constant threat to peace and stability in South Asia. He said the basic problem is the continued denial of the right to self-determination of the people of Kashmir. The OIC secretary general demanded that Indian troops immediately halt their gross human rights violations and atrocities in occupied Kashmir. Dr. Hamid Algabid said the Islamic countries should demonstrate more solidarity on the Kashmir question as well as the resolution of the issue in accordance with the UN resolutions.

Foreign Minister Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali, who is leading the Pakistani delegation, while speaking as the leader of Asian group, said the conference will help promote Islamic solidarity and unity and will provide an opportunity to the participants to hold consultations so as to play a decisive role in shaping the future of the Islamic community.

Conference Attendees Hold Sideline Meetings

Velayati Meets OIC Leader, Ministers

LD1112094895 Tehran IRNA in English 0656 GMT 11 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Conakry, Guinea, Dec. 10, IRNA — [Passage indistinct] general of the 52-nation Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) Hamid Algabid and the foreign ministers of Mali, Pakistan, Syria, Benin and Guinea.

In their meeting [Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar] Velayati and Algabid discussed the situation in Afghanistan as well as the second joint meeting of the Islamic and Western Contact Groups for Bosnia which is to be held in Paris.

Velayati and his Pakistani counterpart Asif Ahmad Khan [name as received] during their talks reviewed bilateral mutual, regional and Islamic world issues. The two sides also criticized Washington's double standard approach to international problems such as the Zionist regime's refusal to sign the Nuclear Non-Prolifration Treaty (NPT).

They also underlined the need for strengthening Tehran-Islamabad cooperation at the OIC and the 10-member Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) in order to find a solution to the Afghan crisis.

Velayati is in Conakry for the 23rd ministerial meeting of the OIC.

On Sunday, Velayati and his Syrian counterpart Faruq al-Shar' had a meeting on the problems of the region and the Islamic world, as well as the two countries' cooperation at the OIC.

Later Velayati met Mali's Dioncouda Traore to discuss issues of mutual interest as well as the two countries' cooperation within the framework of the OIC, the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and at the international forums.

In his meeting with Velayati, Guinean Foreign Minister Kozo Zomanigui who is also the chairman of the 23rd OIC ministerial meeting, welcomed exchange of high-ranking delegations and cooperation between the two countries.

The two sides also assessed as "positive" bilateral cooperation in the health, cultural, economic, mines and trade sectors.

The Iranian foreign minister also held talks with his counterpart from Benin, Edgar Yves Monou, on cooperation between the two countries.

Velayati, Qatari Minister Discuss Cooperation

LD1112095395 Tehran IRNA in English 0723 GMT 11 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Conakry, Guinea, Dec. 11, IRNA — Qatari State Minister for Foreign Affairs Ahmad 'Abdallah al-Mahmud, in a meeting with Iran's Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati here Sunday [10 December], underscored the need to promote bilateral ties.

During the meeting which was held on the sidelines of the foreign ministerial meet of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), the Qatari official termed mutual relations as very friendly.

The latest regional developments, issues of mutual interests and cooperation in the Persian Gulf region were among the major topics discussed by the two sides.

Al-Shar', Sudan Minister Discuss Peace

JN1012144795 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1215 GMT 10 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Conakry—[Syrian] Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' met with Ghazi Salah al-Din, Sudanese minister of state for foreign affairs in Conakry last night on the sidelines of the meetings of the foreign ministers of the Organization of Islamic Conference states.

Talks dealt with developments in the region, the peace process, and bilateral fraternal relations.

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Palestinian Affairs

'Arafat Receives UN Delegation in Gaza

JN0812195395 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1900 GMT 8 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] President 'Arafat received a UN delegation at the Presidency in Gaza today. The delegation comprises (Karl Pashka), assistant to the UN secretary general [title as heard], and (Peter Hanes), the nominee to the post of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency [UNRWA] general commissioner. They were accompanied by Terje Larsen, coordinator of UN activities with the Palestinian Authority.

President 'Arafat discussed with the delegation the future of UN operations in Palestine and their importance at the current stage. The president underlined the importance of UNRWA's activities at the current stage, as well as the importance of the activities of all UN agencies for the economic and social development endeavor in Palestine.

'Arafat's Representative Arrives in Tulkarm

JN1012071495 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0600 GMT 10 Dec 95

[Report by Mu'in Shadid in Tulkarm]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim, secretary general of the Presidential Office, arrived in the city a few moments ago as President 'Arafat's representative to participate in the popular celebrations and to raise the Palestinian flag [words indistinct]. In a statement to our radio upon his arrival, al- Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim said: This is a historic moment in the history of Tulkarm. We must remember our martyrs and detainees. He added: Tulkarm is another step on the road toward Jerusalem, the eternal capital of the state of Palestine. Al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim revealed that President Yasir 'Arafat informed him that he would visit Tulkarm as soon as possible. [passage omitted]

Authority Takes Over Tulkarm After Israeli Pullout

JN1012154995 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1400 GMT 10 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The National Authority took over the liberated city of Tulkarm this morning following the occupation troops' withdrawal from the city last night. A mammoth festival was held to celebrate the occupation's departure in the presence of al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim, secretary general of the Presidential Office, who deputized for President Yasir 'Arafat. Also attending the festival were a number of ministers, Fatah leaders, representatives of the national forces and institutions in the city, and scores of thousands of citizens. Al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim gave a speech on behalf of President Yasir 'Arafat. He congratulated the Palestinian people on the liberation of Tulkarm and the imminent liberation of most of the Palestinian cities during this month. He called on the Palestinian people to safeguard national unity and join forces to build the independent Palestinian state, with holy Jerusalem its capital.

Abu-Rudaynah on Elections, 'Arafat Talks

JN0912145995 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 9 Dec 95

[Statement by Nabil Abu-Rudaynah, political adviser to Yasir 'Arafat, to an unidentified correspondent; place and date not given — recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] As is well known, President Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] has endorsed the Palestinian Election Law for Gaza and the West Bank, including the holy city of Jerusalem. This law is valid only for the transitional period. This means that this law will be for one term. Consequently, the elected legislative council will have the right to enact a new election law. It is widely known that the law has given everyone the right to run for elections and vote in the elections. It has also given everyone the right to run for the post of the president of the National Authority.

Initially, an independent legal committee was formed to draft the Election Law, however, the PLO Executive Committee members, the Palestine National Council [PNC] Speakership, the Fatah Central Committee members in Gaza and the West Bank, and the PNC members residing in the West Bank and Gaza were instrumental in preparing the draft law. Nationalist figures as well as several Palestinian organizations and parties were also involved in the formulation of this law. They all voiced their pertinent remarks and suggestions. The committee examined all these remarks in detail. The draft law was finalized after a dialogue and deliberations that lasted over 40 days. Afterward, the draft law was submitted to the National Authority's Council of Ministers, the PLO Executive Committee members, and the PNC Secretariat for approval. President Abu-'Ammar has endorsed the Election Law, according to which the upcoming elections will be held.

With regard to the separate meetings President 'Arafat held with both Dennis Ross and the Israeli prime minister, I would like to say that the United States has declared its support for the peace process and the peace talks. As for the Israeli prime minister, he asserted that Israel will respect the deadlines for redeployment and withdrawal. For his part, President 'Arafat emphasized the need to implement agreements, respect deadlines, and release all prisoners in accordance

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with the agreement signed between the PLO and the Israeli Government.

Nominations Postponed To Allow for Broader Dialogue

JN0912145195 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1210 GMT 9 Dec 95

[Report by 'Adil al-Za'nun in Gaza]

[FBIS Translated Text] The meeting of the National Authority's Council of Ministers held at the Presidency in Gaza today under His Excellency President Yasir 'Arafat was concluded a short while ago. The Council decided to postpone the date set for filing nominations to the legislative council from 10 to 14 December, with the understanding that 22 December will be the last day on which nominations will be accepted.

Minister of Local Government Dr. Sa'ib 'Urayqat said that this move was made to allow room for continuous dialogue with the nationalist and Islamic forces.

For his part, Dr. Nabil Sha'th, minister of planning and international cooperation, has said that he will meet with an Israeli delegation headed by Oren Shahor near the Erez crossing tomorrow, Sunday, to complete the discussions on issues related to crossing points, safe corridors, the port, and railroad. He added that the Palestinian-Israeli committee on Palestinian prisoners will convene late this week to work on the release of female Palestinian prisoners as well the elderly and sick detainees who have spent two thirds of their prison terms in jail. Dr. Sha'th indicated that the release of 1,000 Palestinian prisoners ahead of the upcoming Palestinian legislative elections is not enough. He pointed out that President 'Arafat will visit the city of Tulkarm soon once its liberation is completed.

As for Ahmad Quray', also known as Abu-'Ala', minister of trade and economy, he said: The conferees agreed to submit a Palestinian paper to the next donor nations meeting on the construction of at least six industrial zones in the National Authority areas. Minister Quray' added that the conferees also debated the issue of displaced Palestinians. The Council stressed the need not to waste time on definitions of displaced persons.

The Council also discussed the outcome of the talks held between President 'Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres, particularly the agreement to release 1,000 Palestinian prisoners and increase the number of Palestinian workers allowed to work in Israel by 9,500. Furthermore, the Council underscored the importance of continuing to implement the second stage of the Declaration of Principles.

The Council of Ministers also discussed the outcome of the talks held between President 'Arafat and Dennis Ross, special Middle East coordinator. Additionally, the Council debated issues related to the budget and ministries.

Spokesman: Gaza PFLP May Ignore Election Boycott

TA0812120495 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 8 Dec 95 p 3

[Report by Lamia Lahoud]

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine's [PFLP] central committee decided Wednesday night [6 December] to boycott Palestinian general elections, upsetting many members of the PFLP in Gaza and the territories who feel their positions were ignored.

PFLP representatives from Gaza attending the Damascus meeting favored participation in the elections, and the Gaza branch may go ahead and form a list for elections despite the decision, PFLP sources said.

All of the PFLP leadership in Gaza and at least half of the leaders of the movement in the territories favor participation in the elections, said Riyad al-Maliki, a PFLP spokesman from Ramallah.

Al-Maliki said the local PFLP has lived under the Palestinian Authority for 18 months, and "has realized that the only way it can shape the political future of the Palestinians is by running in the elections."

He said the decision reflected old trends which are not in touch with the reality on the ground. He said the central committee decided to boycott the elections because they view them as an outcome of the Oslo agreement, which the PFLP rejects. He said the decision was also influenced by earlier ones by the Democratic Front of the Liberation of Palestine and Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement], who both decided not to participate. [passage omitted]

Gaza Civil Rights Activist To Run for PA Presidency

TA1012114395 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 10 Dec 95 p A10

[Report by 'Amira Hess]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Dr. Iyad al-Sarraj, head of the Gaza civil rights organization, announced two days ago that he intends to run for the presidency of the Palestinian Authority [PA]. He made the announcement after the Palestinian police arrested and interrogated him

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on 6 December because he publicly criticized the state of human rights in the PA areas. [passage omitted]

During a news conference after a meeting with Prime Minister Shim'on Peres on 8 December at the Erez checkpoint, 'Arafat was asked for his comment on al-Sarraj's intention to run against him and about the reason he was arrested. 'Arafat responded: "Anyone may run for the presidency if he so chooses. Al-Sarraj was arrested because he provided false information regarding the situation in the PA."

Security Forces Advance Team Arrives in Hebron

JN1012151595 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1400 GMT 10 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Vanguards of the National Security Forces have arrived in Hebron to mark the beginning of the National Authority's takeover of the governorate and the Israeli troops' redeployment outside population centers there. [passage omitted]

Negotiators Agree To Build Gaza-West Bank Bridge

JN1012210595 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1900 GMT 10 Dec 95

[Report by 'Adil al-Za'nun in Gaza]

[FBIS Translated Text] Palestinian and Israeli sides have agreed to build a 40-km-long bridge between Gaza and Tarqumiyah in the Hebron area.

Following his meeting with Oren Shahor at the headquarters of the Coordination and Liaison Directorate near the Erez checkpoint this evening, Dr. Nabil Sha'th, minister of planning and international cooperation, said the functions of this bridge will include carrying electricity, gas, and telephone lines.

Dr. Sha'th added that a technical committee will be formed to work out a necessary study, accurately outline the plan, and determine the cost of this project. He said this committee will begin meeting next week. It will be chaired by Dr. Samih al-'Abd, assistant under secretary of the Planning and International Cooperation.

Dr. Sha'th said it was also agreed to rebuild the railroad linking northern Gaza to the southern Gaza Strip, and then to Egypt. This railroad will also link Gaza to the city of Ashdod, so Palestinians can transport their goods with complete freedom and without any restrictions.

The Israeli side also agreed to allow the entry of Arab and international publications into the National Authority areas without any obstacles or interference. The Palestinian side demanded the repatriation of 70 Palestinian families from Canada Camp on the Egyptian side to Tall al-Sultan Camp in Rafah. The Israelis will respond to this demand next week.

Dr. Sha'th pointed out that intensive contacts on Gaza port and airport, as well as on the border crossings, will be held next week. Discussions will also be held on the safe passages and the issue of the al-Mawasi area.

Police Chief on Security Effort, Cooperation

NC1112081395 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0705 GMT 11 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 11 Dec (MENA) — Major General Nasr Yusuf, Palestinian Police and Public Security chief, has stated that Egypt is playing a primary role in providing assistance and expertise to the Palestinian police force. We are looking forward to stronger security cooperation with Egypt, he said.

In statements to AL-AHRAM published today, Yusuf said the Palestinian police are watching the activity of the extremist movements that oppose peace. We work to thwart their operations before they are carried out, but sometimes we handle things after incidents occur, he added.

On the impact of the assassination of former Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin on the security efforts of the Palestinian police, Major General Yusuf said: The Palestinians were not surprised by the assassination; we knew Israeli extremism existed. He noted that Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat repeatedly warned against this extremism but his warnings, regrettably, fell on deaf ears.

Yusuf praised security cooperation between Palestinian and Israeli services in the self-rule areas and said that the two sides solved many problems and excesses on both sides.

Asked to evaluate things after the entry of the Palestinian police force to the self-rule areas, Yusuf said it was a difficult and arduous stage. But we overcame it and the security services made rapid efforts to develop their performance despite their limited resources, he added.

He pointed out that the Palestinian police are being deployed as scheduled and that the manpower necessary to meet security needs is being provided.

On preparations for elections, he said the political leadership is preparing to hold the elections on 20 January as scheduled. As for us, the police, he said, we are preparing ourselves for the event as our first security experience. We hope we succeed.

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Extent of Palestinian, Israeli Extremist Ties Revealed

JN0912152395 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1400 GMT 9 Dec 95

[Report by by 'Adil al-Za'nun in Gaza]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The National Authority's Council of Ministers held its weekly meeting at the Presidency headquarters in Gaza today. The meeting was chaired by President 'Arafat. [passage omitted]

Presidency Secretary General al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim has said President 'Arafat presented some documents to the Council of Ministers that reveal the extent of cooperation and coordination between the Palestinian and Israeli extremists before and after terrorist operations in Israel carried out with the aim of destroying the peace process.

'Abd-al-Rahim said the National Authority will send these documents to the Arab League, the Organization of Islamic Conference, the cosponsors of the peace process, and all concerned countries. The Presidency secretary general emphasized that President 'Arafat presented the text of statements made by Avishay Raviv, leader of the Israeli extremist Eyal movement, to newspaper [BAIR SHELEM] on cooperation and coordination between Eyal movement and some quarters in the Islamic Jihad Movement in order to destroy the peace process using all means.

'Abd-al-Rahim said the Council of Ministers discussed the dialogue with Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and stressed that the National Authority is prepared to begin the dialogue in Cairo, especially since the Egyptian brothers showed readiness to host that dialogue as soon as possible. [passage omitted]

Hamas Spokesman: Invitation to Talks With PLO Awaited

NC0812131595 Paris AFP in English 1023 GMT 8 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Amman, Dec 8 (AFP) — The Palestinian militant group Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] said here Friday [8 December] it was still waiting for an official invitation from Egypt for a planned dialogue with the PLO in Cairo.

"Any country seeking to mediate should send invitations to both parties, otherwise inviting only one party could work against the principle of impartiality," Amman-based Hamas spokesman Ibrahim Ghawshah told AFP.

Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa said Wednesday that reconciliation talks between Hamas and the PLO would go ahead as planned in Cairo, but he did not give a date.

"Egypt is open to both parties, who will meet in Cairo," Musa said.

But Ghawshah questioned the choice of Cairo, in the light of the "tension which flared there" after the ruling party won by a landslide on Wednesday in parliamentary elections held under a barrage of fraud charges.

He also pointed out that Hamas, or the Islamic Resistance Movement, did not have official channels with Egypt, unlike the PLO which has a mission in Cairo.

PLO leader Yasir 'Arafat has made several gestures towards Hamas in a bid to persuade them to participate in the first Palestinian general elections to be held on January 20.

But the group has so far said it would boycott the polls and refuses to drop its threat of anti-Israeli attacks aimed at destroying the PLO's autonomy accords with the Jewish state.

Islamic Jihad Members Vow Continued Struggle

NC0912103095 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0630 GMT 9 Dec 95

[Report on memorial service for Dr. Fathi al-Shaqaqi, former Islamic Jihad secretary general, by correspondent Hani Fakhr-al-Din in Damascus; date not given — recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] On the passing of 40 days since the martyrdom of Fathi al-Shiqaqi, the Islamic Jihad Movement held a ceremony in the Arab Club Hall at the al-Yarmuk camp in Damascus. Attending the ceremony were Dr. Ramadan 'Abdallah Shalah, secretary general of the Islamic Jihad Movement, and his delegation; Hizballah Secretary General Hasan Nasrallah and his delegation, representatives of 10 Palestinian groups; a delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran Embassy in Damascus; delegation of Muslim Ulema Grouping in Lebanon; delegation of the Syrian mufti; a delegation of the Nasrite Arab Democratic Party in Egypt; and popular Syrian, Lebanese, and Palestinian delegations. [passage omitted]

A speech by Syrian Mufti Shaykh Kiftaru was read by Dr. Muhammad Habash. He praised the stance, work, and role of martyr al-Shaqaqi, noting that al-Asad's Syria sponsored the al-Jihad movements while raising the flag of peace, because jihad and peace never contradict one another. He said that peace does not mean that we should permit our enemy to control us, our sanctities, and our dignity.

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A speech by the Palestinian Alliance was read by Talal Naji, the assistant secretary general of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General command [PFLP-GC]. He pledged to martyr al-Shaqaqi to continue the march until all the occupied territory is liberated and all legitimate rights are realized. He said that the PFLP-GC leadership and base stand by Hizballah and the Islamic Jihad movement and all resistance forces, particularly Hasan Nasrallah and the Islamic Resistance, of whom we are proud and revere, along with all the mujahidin who raise the flag of Islam and Muslims. [passage omitted]

Hizballah Secretary General Hasan Nasrallah called on all Palestinian forces and parties inside and outside [the Palestinian territory] to be faithful to the blood of martyr al-Shaqaqi. He called on them not to give any legal character to the Palestinian Authority of the self-rule. He said: From a Shari'ah, Islamic, national, pan-Arab, ethical, and humane point of view, we demand that no support, not even partial or tactical, is given to the Oslo agreement. This, he said, would be tantamount to sharing every crime that Yasir 'Arafat and his group committed. He called for shouldering full responsibility for and effective participation in confronting the Zionist enemy. Addressing the audience, he said: If you cannot take part in the fighting and jihad, you must not cast your ballot in the traitorous Oslo agreement. He said that martyr mujahid al-Shaqaqi was not only a martyr of the Islamic Jihad Movement but of all the nation and people because he sacrificed his life for Palestine and the nation's dignity. He said: We can change the equation and impose the nation's will. We must pass the cause on to our future generations. He called for liberating Palestine and Jerusalem.

Nasrallah said: [Begin Nasrallah recording] [passage omitted] It is true that the Arab regimes are surrounding Syria, but Syria is the heart of every Arab. If we look for a president of an Arab state who commands the highest esteem and attention by the Arab peoples and Muslims in the world, we will find that President struggler Hafiz al-Asad [applause] is the one who commands this attention. Why? Because he said with courage and frankness: If I were the one who stood at the door and he was the president of the republic and gave up one inch of the land to the occupiers, I would kill him with my own hands. This is not ordinary talk. This is historic talk by an historic man at an historic stage. If the Arab leaders had this attitude, this ideology, and stance and pursued such action, where would we have been now? Yes. With al-Asad's Syria, with the lofty bastion of Islam in Iran and His Eminence Khamene'i, with the allied forces in Palestine, with our brothers in the Islamic Jihad and Hamas, and with every honest, mujahid, and struggler, we will continue on this path to the end. Palestine and Jerusalem and the name and blood of Fathi al-Shaqaqi will remain the symbol of the fighting and jihad. "O ye who believe: If you will aid the cause of God, He will aid you and plant your feet firmly. If God helps you, none can overcome you." [Koranic verse] [end recording] [passage omitted]

Arab-Israeli Talks

'Arafat, Peres Discuss Redeployment, Prisoners

TA0812135095 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1300 GMT 8 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Coming out of his meeting with Yasir 'Arafat a short time ago, Prime Minister Shim'on Peres said that Rabin's assassination did not kill the peace process, which will continue with even greater impetus. In their meeting at the Erez checkpoint, Peres and 'Arafat discussed a series of pending issues related to the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] redeployment in the territories.

Our correspondent Mira Amsalem reports the two leaders discussed the release of approximately 1,000 Palestinian prisoners. They also discussed cooperation between the respective police forces with a view to overcoming terrorism. It was decided to increase the number of work permits for Palestinians from the territories by 9,500. Yasir 'Arafat raised the issue of the elevated road slated to connect Gaza to the West Bank. The two also discussed the situation in Nabulus and a series of economic issues.

Agree on Release of 1,000 Prisoners

JN0812144095 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1400 GMT 8 Dec 95

[Report by 'Adil al-Za'nun in Gaza]

[FBIS Translated Text] President Yasir 'Arafat met with Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres near Erez checkpoint this afternoon. They agreed to release 1,000 Palestinian prisoners from Israeli occupation prisons before the holding of the Palestinian legislative elections, scheduled for 20 January. They also agreed to increase the number of workers who work inside the green line from the West Bank and Gaza Strip by 9,500.

President 'Arafat described his talks with Peres as positive and constructive. He emphasized that the upcoming Palestinian legislative elections will be held in a free and democratic atmosphere without any interference. 'Arafat said Peres will continue the peace process with the same steps that the two sides have begun. The president said action will continue against those who try to sabotage the peace process.

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President 'Arafat pointed out that this meeting is the first since the assassination of former Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin. He said the assassination was a loss to the whole peace process and not only to the Palestinians and the Israelis.

For his part, Peres emphasized that his government is committed to the principles set by Rabin to realize peace. He added that the joint ministerial committee concerned with the negotiations on the release of the Palestinian prisoners will meet to discuss releasing 1,000 Palestinian prisoners in accordance with the agreement reached in today's meeting.

Peres said discussions dealt with the best means to facilitate life in the West Bank. He described the meeting as constructive and good. The Israeli prime minister expressed hope for progress on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks to realize comprehensive peace in the region.

'Arafat Discusses Prisoners With Israeli Arabs

JN1012145495 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1400 GMT 10 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] President Yasir 'Arafat received Israeli Knesset Arab Members Talab al-Sani' and 'Abd-al-Wahhab Darawishah. They dealt with the latest developments of Oslo agreement implementation and the role of al-Sani' and Darawishah in pressuring Israeli President 'Ezer Weizman and the Israeli Government to release all Palestinian prisoners.

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Algeria

Dembri Sees Problems in Relations With France

LD0912164595 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 9 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Affairs Minister Mohamed Salah Dembri has described Algerian-French relations as not in the best of shape, in an interview with LE TRIBUNE [name as received] published today.

Mohamed Salah Dembri said that "there are a number of questions which need to be settled one day between Paris and Algeria."

On the most important questions which should be settled in order to clear the atmosphere in Algerian-French relations, the foreign minister mentioned the movement of people, the Algerian airline problem, and the need to initiate a political dialogue based on clear rules so as not to allow the Algerian-French relations to be led by rumors or hasty and indiscriminate analyses. "It is time for a sound assessment of the common interests in Algerian-French cooperation" the foreign minister said and added "for example, when we talk about the question of assistance there is a difference in form and content. In general all that leaves Algeria toward France on the trade level, is in the interest of France, therefore, what is termed as assistance is in fact a process that benefits the French three times the amount granted to us and it is also connected with the marketing of French goods in the Algerian market." "Therefore," the foreign minister says, "the issue of mutual interests is under consideration and for us we would say that this cooperation should be better."

Concerning a question about a probable meeting between the two sides, Mr Dembri said that there was no definite schedule for that in the near future. However, these things can be arranged later on.

Dembri Protests UN Move on Western Sahara Elections

LD0912201095 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 9 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] I have just received this cable which says: Concerning the situation in Western Sahara, Mr. Mohamed Salah Dembri, our foreign affairs minister, expressed in a message addressed to the UN Security Council president Algeria's protest against the suggestion proposed by the UN secretary general for determining the voters' identity who will take part in the self-determination referendum in Western Sahara.

The new measure proposed by the UN secretary general suggests a modification to the population structure of the electorates by listing tens of thousands of new voters, a matter which could affect the credibility of the referendum.

Western Sahara Envoy Denounces UN Election Plan

LD1012183595 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 10 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The Saharan republic's ambassador to Algeria stressed the Saharan leadership's rejection of the new proposal of UN Secretary General Butrus-Ghali, on the process for determining the identity of Saharan voters, describing it as a major fallacy, and a conspiracy which could blow up the peace plan if endorsed by the UN Security Council. [passage omitted]

The Saharan ambassador said in an interview with the national radio today that Butrus-Ghali's proposal came in response to Moroccan aspirations. He reminded of a previous proposal which stipulated that in order to speed up the voters's identity process, the Saharans who had been counted should be checked against the Spanish document in order to avoid interpretations and forgeries. Mr. (Biba Salek) said that the Moroccans had backed down from that proposal after they initially accepted it, because it did not serve Morocco's interests, as the Moroccan interior minister had clearly affirmed.

The Saharan official pointed out that the new proposal was incompatible and at conflict with the former proposal, whereby all lists presented by the Moroccan authorities to the members of the identification committee were accepted.

Presidency Source Denies Contacts With FIS

LD1012173695 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 10 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The daily newspaper AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT issued in London, has recently published a report on contacts between the presidency and the dissolved party [Islamic Salvation Front, FIS].

An authorized source at the presidency issued a categorical denial of all the contents of AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT's report, describing the matter as a mere attempt at poisoning the atmosphere.

FIS Blames Armed Islamic Group for Imam's Death

LD0912191895 Paris Radio France International in French 1730 GMT 9 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Islamic Salvation Front [FIS] has accused the GIA [Armed Islamic Group] of being responsible for [the killing of] Imam [Abdelbaki] Sahraoui in July in Paris.

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The Islamic [Salvation] Front also believes that Liamine Zeroual may be the best man to start negotiations with.

Daily Newspaper Suspended; Director Arrested

LD1112111795 Paris Radio France International in French 0730 GMT 11 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] A word about Algeria, where the director of the largest French-language daily newspaper, LIBERTE, has been jailed and the newspaper suspended for two weeks. Abrouss Outoudert was arrested at Algiers International Airport yesterday as he was about to leave for Paris to receive a prize awarded to the Algerian press. He is accused of repeated publication of a libellous report. Professional organizations will launch a three-day strike from tomorrow.

TV Technician Attacked by 'Armed Group'

LD1012123795 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 10 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] We have just heard from authoritative sources that Abdelkarim Bendaoud, our technician colleague, was the target of an armed attack yesterday. The attack took place in front of his house in Scala in El Biar district [Algiers] at around 1730. Our colleague was shot several times by an armed group and was in coma when he arrived at Ain Naadja hospital. At this moment, he is still in coma. [passage omitted]

Security Services Kill 37 'Criminals'

LD1012172495 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 10 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] A statement by the security services said today that their forces had killed 37 criminals in different search operations they carried out in the provinces of Algiers, Sidi Bel Abbes, Batna, Bouira, Setif, and Constantine, and succeeded in recovering a quantity of weapons and ammunition.

Egypt

Musa Returns From London Bosnia Conference, Comments

NC1012065595 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2230 GMT 9 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 10 Dec (MENA) — Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa and his delegation returned to Cairo from London tonight after participating in the London peace conference on Bosnia, which concluded earlier today. In an arrival statement, Musa said agreement was reached with the countries of the Organization of Islamic Conference to play a role in returning stability to Bosnia, continuing construction, and participating in peacekeeping. He said that Egypt, along with Turkey, Malaysia, and Pakistan, expressed readiness to participate in the peacekeeping force but that the details of this participation have not been discussed. He noted that all peacekeeping forces will be under a unified command.

Discussing the resolution of the European Security and Cooperation ministerial conference, to send a mission to Bosnia for one year to supervise the elections, human rights, and arms limitation, Musa said the Islamic countries will coordinate with the peace implementation council, of which Egypt is a member, on an understanding with the general committee that steers the peace process forward. This will take place before the Dayton agreement is signed in Paris next week.

Further on Musa Comments

NC1012161795 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1520 GMT 10 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 10 Dec (MENA) — Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has stated that Israeli Foreign Minister Ehud Baraq will visit Egypt soon to discuss the efforts being made to remove the obstacles impeding the Middle East peace process.

On Egypt's participation in the Palestinian elections scheduled for 20 January, Musa said that Egypt will join the group of international observers.

On the London conference on Bosnia, Musa said that it was an important one because views were exchanged on aspects of the Daytona peace agreement. He added: We were told at the conference of the arrangements being planned by various international organizations, such as the UNHCR, the Red Cross, the Organization on Security and Cooperation in Europe, NATO, the United States, and the European Union countries.

He said: The conference was a good opportunity to study the agreement, appoint the high commissioner, and form the peace council and the committee charged with implementing the agreement.

On Egypt's participation in the Bosnia peacekeeping force, Musa said that this is still under study and consideration.

On his visit to Paris to attend the final signing of the Dayton peace agreement on 14 December, Musa said that the agreement will be signed by the parties directly concerned and by members of the peace council. He added: The Islamic Contact Group will begin its meetings on 12 December to discuss participation in the peacekeeping force in Bosnia. The European-International Contact Group will then meet; this will be followed by the general meeting.

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Musa Discusses Peace Process, Regional Issues

NC1112065795 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2145 GMT 10 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 10 Dec (MENA) — Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has denied claims by some parties that Egypt has sent armed groups to confront the terrorists abroad. He described these claims as lies and slander. He said it is normal for Egypt to discuss confronting attacks on its establishments abroad following the Islamabad incident but the discussions focus on technical issues.

Musa was speaking in an interview with tomorrow's AL-AHRAM.

He discussed the possibilities of achieving peace in the area, U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's forthcoming visit, Iran's nuclear capabilities, contacts between Egypt and Israel on the nuclear issue, attempts to marginalize Egypt's role in the region, speeding up normalization between some Arab countries and Israel, and the outcome of the London conference on peace in Bosnia.

On the Paris conference for peace in Bosnia and the crisis over the two French pilots shot down over Bosnia, Musa said the conference will be held despite the crisis surrounding the pilots. He added that Egypt will attend the conference and will work initially to reconcile the positions of the grouping of Islamic countries and then define their role, such as participation in the peacekeeping force and contribution to rebuilding Bosnia.

Asked whether the issue of the so-called mujahidin in Bosnia was raised at the London peace conference, Musa said: We did not discuss this issue. We are now discussing the cease-fire, the start of the peace process, and supervision of the cease-fire. All these are leading to the nonuse of force in Bosnia.

On confronting the Serb threat to the Dayton agreement and whether NATO or the United Nations will disarm the Serbs, Musa said: If the Serbs challenge the peace process, then they will be challenging the world, which is now acting to implement it. They would then have to shoulder the responsibility. The international forces now in Bosnia, NATO, the international community, and the peace council formed in Bosnia will confront the outlaws. They are accused of ethnic cleansing, and they must be tried. He added: At the conference I raised the issue of the war criminals who applied ethnic cleansing. I said that discussing human rights or forming a committee to supervise human rights in Bosnia is one thing and the trial of those who practice ethnic cleansing is something else. If the criminals are not tried, then talk of human rights will remain a farce.

On Iran's nuclear capabilities and whether these endanger the security of the region, Musa said: As long as there is an Israeli nuclear program, then no one can talk about other capabilities or condemn them, particularly in Iran's case, because Iran is a member of the international agency against proliferation, hence any nuclear activities it is involved in must be conducted under international control.

He expressed his belief that this issue is exaggerated. He said: At any rate, since there is an Israeli nuclear program, we cannot talk except on the basis of making the Middle East a region free from any weapons of mass destruction. But if just one country maintains a program of nuclear armament, then this will lead to a nuclear arms race in the whole region.

On whether there are contacts between Egypt and Israel on this issue, Musa said: Contacts have started. But I would like to say first that we have not signed the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. This treaty was extended by a majority; we were not among the countries that supported its infinite and unconditional extension. We did not sign the extension, nor did any Arab country, and 70 other countries also abstained. As for bilateral contacts, we are always trying to open the door but these contacts have not led to any result yet.

On his expectations for Christopher's visit to the region and whether he believes there will be a step forward in the peace talks on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks, the Egyptian foreign minister said: Yes, there is movement but I am not sure there will be a step forward because of this movement.

Asked whether there is really a race toward normalization in the region and where this would lead, Musa told AL-AHRAM: I do not believe the situation in the region could be described as such. We should look at things from a different angle. The Palestinian-Israeli agreement is being implemented and Israel has withdrawn from cities. The Palestinian elections are imminent (20 January) and the final stage talks will also be held soon (4 May). The Syrian- Israeli track is moving and active negotiations have been held. The same applies to the Lebanese track. Thus it is natural for the Israeli-Arab relationship to be set in motion. But if these steps are not taken and if it emerges that the Palestinians have not obtained what they deserve, then this will naturally affect relations with Israel. The process is one of a balance between progress in the peace process and progress in natural relations with Israel.

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Musa added: Peace has not been established yet, but we are on the road to it. We should talk about economic cooperation at the end of the road, not at the start. He said: We have decisions to make as sovereign countries, such as linking economic cooperation with political progress in the peace process.

Musa said that attempts by some parties to marginalize Egypt's regional role are nothing new. He declared that the issue is not one of reducing or marginalizing Egypt's role, but Egypt's clear position on peace, which states that since the peace process has begun, it must continue, but the peace must be an Arab-Israeli one, not a purely Israeli peace. He explained that this does not mean everything Israel wants should be implemented: only those things on which there is mutual agreement.

The foreign minister added: All minds should be turned toward this process. We must all understand that progress on the peace front will lead to greater regional cooperation.

Musa asserted that this is the correct policy to follow whether it yields profit or loss for us and whether it produces good or bad relations with this or that country.

Concerning Egyptian-Sudanese relations, particularly following the Sudanese authorities' accusation that Egypt supplied the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement with tanks and aircraft, the foreign minister remarked: Very regrettably, the Sudanese regime is inventing things, perhaps because it lacks good arguments with which to address the Sudanese public.

Musa pointed out that the Sudanese people understand that Egypt's position on south Sudan is, perhaps, or, indeed, certainly, stronger than that of the Sudanese Government. He explained that Egypt supports maintaining Sudanese unity and territorial integrity. He pointed out that those who discussed the secession of south Sudan did so in Khartoum, but Egypt will never do anything that encourages the south's secession. Musa described any claims to the contrary regarding Egypt's position as "simply nonsense."

'Amr Musa said Egyptian-Sudanese relations are currently bad because of the Sudanese regime's wrong behavior. He pointed out that the Sudanese regime has failed to refute the charge that it encourages terrorism and that Sudanese agencies took part in the attempted assassination of President Mubarak.

He declared: They have failed to refute the accusation. In our eyes, they are suspects until they can prove otherwise.

Rights Group Says Government Rigged Elections

NC0912090195 Paris AFP in English 2248 GMT 8 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Cairo, Dec 8 (AFP) — The government and opposition groups were both involved in widespread fraud and violence in the run-offs of Egypt's legislative elections this week, a human rights group said Friday [8 December].

However, the Egyptian Human Rights Organisation said the main targets of police intervention in the second round vote Wednesday were Islamic opposition candidates.

The rights group said it had details of "interventions by security services, criminal and violent acts involving supporters of government candidates as well as their opponents, which led to fraud in numerous districts."

"The interventions by the security services in the second round were aimed at supporting the candidates of the ruling National Democratic Party (NDP), in particular against Islamic fundamentalist candidates," it added.

Ninety-nine victorious independents joined the ranks of the NDP of President Husni Mubarak Friday to bring its total of seats to 416 out of 444 in parliament. Opposition parties, which accuse the government of a massive election fraud campaign to squeeze them out of the assembly, were credited with only 13 seats.

Only one of remaining 15 independents elected as deputies is a member of the fundamentalist Moslem Brotherhood.

The human rights group said Brotherhood candidates who were said to have lost seats in the Nile Delta region had been the victims of fraud.

It said three polling stations in the Al-Batanun constituency were attacked by NDP supporters who seized electoral lists, voting cards and official papers as security services stood by.

In some cases, police intervened in favour of leading opposition candidates "in an attempt to improve the image of the new parliament after the large-scale government intervention in the first round (on November 29) because of which no opposition candidates had been elected."

However, in most cases police adopted an attitude of "passive neutrality" when faced with NDP violence and "intervened with force to stop similar acts in favour of NDP opponents," the watchdog said.

The organisation renewed its appeal to Mubarak to annul the vote and appoint an "impartial government" to organise new elections.

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The fraud reports in the first round led to a court battle after an administrative court ruled that results in one third of the seats must be cancelled due to rigging.

A higher court is to hear an interior ministry appeal against the verdict on Saturday.

The United States also urged Egypt after both rounds to investigate claims of vote fraud.

Rights Group Reports 51 Killed in Election Violence

NC1112120795 Paris AFP in English 1059 GMT 11 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Cairo, Dec 11 (AFP) — A total of 51 people were killed, 28 of them by police, during Egyptian parliamentary elections and in protests afterwards, an Egyptian human rights group said on Monday [11 December].

The Center for Human Rights Legal Aid (CHRLA) also condemned widespread fraud by police and the state during the two rounds of voting, saying it meant "the destruction of the democratic system" in a report received by AFP.

The CHRLA set the number killed in the two rounds of voting, completed on Wednesday, at 51 along with 300 injured, many as police broke up demonstrations protesting vote rigging by the ruling National Democratic party (NDP).

"At least 28 (were killed) by police," the report added, while the rest mostly died in clashes between rival candidates. "This is the first time parliament elections have seen this number of killed and injured," the CHRLA said.

The two bloodiest clashes came in the Delta towns of Qallin and Disuq, where seven and five people were killed respectively when police put down demonstrations against victories by NDP candidates, the CHRLA said.

Opposition and rights groups have called for a new election, blaming fraud for the crushing victory of the NDP, which won 416 out of 444 seats in parliament.

The opposition took only 14 seats, including one for the Moslem Brotherhood, while the remainder went to independents.

The CHRLA called the NDP majority "illogical," saying the results "reflect the government's refusal of the principle of peaceful disagreement with it and of the people's right to remove the standing government."

The group called for a new law giving the supreme court the right to decide appeals against election results, since legal scholars now generally put that right in the hands of parliament itself.

The supreme administrative court is to rule on December 18 on whether to cancel results in a quarter of parliament's seats due to election fraud. But the court is expected to back parliament's right to decide its own election results.

"A parliament which has such a sweeping majority of the ruling party cannot be expected to decide on the legitimacy of its members in an independent and impartial way," the CHRLA said.

Opposition Calls For Dissolution of New Parliament

NC0912205195 Paris AFP in English 1946 GMT 9 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Cairo, Dec 9 (AFP) — Egypt's opposition parties, crushed in legislative elections, vowed Saturday [9 December] to form a common front to seek the dissolution of parliament and a new vote under international supervision.

The parties threatened to withdraw their deputies from the newly-elected assembly, calling it "illegitimate" due to alleged massive vote fraud.

"Parliament must be dissolved and a new impartial government formed to hold new elections," the party heads said in a joint statement after a press conference in Cairo.

"Among the guarantees to prevent a repetition of the violence and fraud (of last week's election), the opposition seeks international supervision of the general elections," they said.

The opposition parties and the Muslim Brotherhood, who put forward almost 600 candidates in the polls, won only 14 out of 444 parliament seats in elections which were completed on Wednesday.

The ruling National Democratic Party of President Husni Mubarak took 416 seats, along with 14 independents.

Egyptian human rights group have already called for new elections, citing widespread vote rigging.

The parties said their leaderships would "meet to study possible responses," including the unilateral withdrawal of its deputies from the assembly.

The vice president of the liberal Wafd party, Nu'man Jum'ah, who lost in his bid for a seat, warned of potential violence by supporters frustrated by government "repression."

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"How can we go to our parties' youth now after these elections and say we must follow peaceful methods when the government has closed off all means of peaceful change," Jum'ah said.

Brotherhood spokesman Ma'mun al-Hudaybi called on the parties to join in demonstrations which broke out in several northern Delta town protesting election results on Thursday.

"These demonstrations are an unprecedented refusal of the elections and we must launch contacts with them," al-Hudaybi said.

But divisions appeared even as the parties met, as shouting matches broke out at the press conference between Brotherhood supporters and the representative of the Marxist Tajammu' [National Progressive Unionist Group—NGUG].

The Tajammu' ruled out withdrawing from its five new seats, saying it would wait until the dissolution of parliament.

Holds News Conference on Elections

NC0912213895 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2057 GMT 9 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 9 Dec (MENA) — A number of Egyptian opposition party leaders held a news conference this evening at which they commented on their parties' stands on the People's Assembly elections.

The conference was attended by Liberal Party leader Mustafa Kamil Murad, Nasirite Party Secretary Diya'-al-Din Dawud, Labor Party leader Ibrahim Shukri, Samir Fayyad for the National Progressive Unionist Grouping [NPUG], and Dr. Nu'man Jum'ah, deputy leader of the Wafd Party. At the news conference, the opposition leaders acknowledged that there was high turnout and great enthusiasm by the voters, but they differed about the reasons why their parties' candidates failed in the elections. The NPUG representative emphasized that the party's representatives who won in the elections will continue to assume their tasks in the party.

The opposition party representatives differed on how to deal with the situation. Some of them demanded withdrawal from the assembly but others rejected this approach. Most of them blamed the government for their failure in the elections.

The opposition parties won only 13 assembly seats: 6 for the Wafd Party, 5 for the NPUG, and one for each of the Liberal and Nasirite parties.

Prosecutors Seek Death Sentences for 2 'Militants'

NC1012075295 Paris AFP in English 2228 GMT 9 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Cairo, Dec 10 (AFP) — Egyptian prosecutors on Saturday [9 December] asked for the death sentence against two Muslim militants and life sentences for 21 others accused of plotting to assassinate government ministers, legal sources said.

Prosecutors told the supreme security court that the 23 members of the Jihad extremist group, arrested in November 1993, had planned to kill the speaker of parliament and the ministers of education and information.

They were also charged with seeking to murder the governor of northern al-Gharbiyah province and the president of the 1981 military court which convicted Jihad members for the assassination of former president Anwar al-Sadat.

Legal sources said the defendants also confessed to planning "a major political figure", meaning President Husni Mubarak, but the charge was not included in the prosecution accusations.

Death sentences were sought against the two leaders of the cell, Hasan Muhammad Hashim and Muhammad Mustafa Sayyid. Sayyid, like two others in the case, is still at large.

A date for continuing the trial was not set, the sources said.

Jihad, one of the groups spearheading militant violence in Egypt, claimed a 1993 attempt to assassinate Information Minister Safwat al-Sharif in a separate murder plot already tried.

Ethiopia To Reveal Evidence on Assassination Attempt

NC1012122995 Cairo MENA in English 1209 GMT 10 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Addis Ababa, Dec 10 (MENA) — The Ethiopian Government has new evidence on Khartoum's involvement in the assassination attempt on President Husni Mubarak in June in the Ethiopian capital, a diplomatic source here said today.

Foreign Minister Sioum Mesfin will reveal the new evidence at the December 18 meeting of foreign ministers of the Central Mechanism for the Peaceful Settlement of African Disputes here, he added.

Ethiopia was compelled to do so due to Sudan's consistent refusal to extradite the three terrorists who masterminded and carried out the abortive assassination

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in Ethiopia, he said. Ethiopia's move also follows the failure of the Organization of African Unity and its mission in Khartoum to convince Sudan to settle the problem through peaceful channels, the source added.

Concern Over Iraq-Egypt Developments Reported

MM0812145695 London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI in Arabic 7 Dec 95 p 3

[Unattributed report: "Refurbishment of Iraqi Embassy in Cairo Causes Concern in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI — After having been reassured about King Fahd's health following his appearance on Saudi Television's first channel shaking hands with members of his family, the Saudi Embassy has a new cause for concern in the form of the Egyptian-Iraqi rapprochement, which according to many signs is likely soon to take the form of full diplomatic representation between the two countries.

Embassy sources reacted with some caution and great expectations to reports that the Iraqi ambassador's office is being refurbished and new lights are being fitted to replace those that were broken, as a sign that something is about to happen between the two states to stir the waters that have been stagnant since the second Gulf war.

Qays Mahmud, the Iraqi charge d'affaires under the supervision of the Embassy of India, said that he is very pleased with the signs of rapprochement which have started to appear in friendly statements by several Egyptian officials, first and foremost by President Husni Mubarak who recently said that he rejects any attempt at partitioning Iraq and increasing its problems.

Commenting on the fact that some Gulf embassies are surprised at the rapprochement, Qays said that any Arab, wherever he is, should be pleased with the good winds blowing in the region now after all these years of separation.

He stressed that the Gulf states' misgivings about this rapprochement are groundless because it would serve the interest of the Arab homeland and that the apprehension should instead affect other states such as Israel.

The charge d'affaires expressed his regret with regard to the fact that the scholarships granted to Iraqi students by the Egyptian Education Ministry were discontinued five years ago. He said that these grants were like a bridge between the two fraternal peoples.

AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI has learned that the Kuwaiti Embassy has expressed its apprehension and concern to some Egyptian officials that this rapprochement between Iraq and Egypt could lead to the lifting of the blockade on Baghdad before a final solution to the Kuwaiti POW's problem is reached.

The Kuwaiti Embassy has asked the Egyptian Foreign Ministry to use its influence to solve this problem which is of great concern to the Kuwaiti people as a whole.

Some sources in the Kuwaiti Embassy expressed their concern about reports that an Egyptian official is to travel to Iraq in the coming weeks to discuss raising the level of diplomatic representation between the two countries.

Iraqi Charge d'Affaires Qays Mahmud stressed that the upgrading of the representation level between the two countries has been requested by Iraq over the recent period and that several Egyptian officials have promised that it would be carried out.

The number of Iraqis working under the supervision of the Indian Embassy in Cairo does not exceed 20, including the cultural and information attache, the charge d'affaires, and the administration office. Since the second Gulf war, none of the Egyptians who used to work in Iraq has traveled there.... Similarly, no Iraqi tourist has arrived in Cairo during that period despite the fact that Egypt was a favorite destination for Iraqi tourists who prefered it to others in the region.

The Iraqi community in Cairo numbers 1,156 persons who are permanent residents. Some are married to Egyptian women, others are studying there, and a few have investments in trade, such as electrical and leather goods stores.

The situation of this community has greatly improved and they are treated with great affection by Egyptians, especially those who have visited Iraq in the past and who see it as the only state which has treated them with great respect despite its people's circumstances.

Some Gulf Embassy staff are surprised at the sudden appearance of this great optimism among the Iraqi community and the Iraqi Embassy staff who have greeted the winter season with new clothes after five years of austerity. The Egyptian-Iraqi rapprochement, especially at this time, is due to two factors: First, a great deal of popular pressure and indignation by Egyptian public opinion due to the break in diplomatic relations between the two countries all these years despite the fact that Iraq remained loyal to Egypt and helped to boost the Egyptian economy especially during the eighties by employing more than 3 million Egyptian workers.

The second reason is the Qatari-Iraqi rapprochement. Many Egyptian officials think that it would not be

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proper if a small state were to take this step while Egypt, with its cultural and political influence in the region, remains a mere spectator.

In a statement to AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI Qays Mahmud said that he has great hopes that diplomatic representation will resume early next year.

He urged educated Egyptian artists to visit Baghdad to see the losses caused by the blockade imposed on the people there and added that the office of the charge d'affaires is there to help with all travel arrangements and issue entry visas, but that travel must be overland.

He expressed the hope that the Egyptian Education Ministry will in the near future give the scholarships to the Iraqi students who need them.

'Islamic Group' Threatens Pakistan With Hijackings

NC0812222395 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2204 GMT 8 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Islamabad, 8 Dec (MENA) — Members of the Islamic Group, which earlier claimed responsibility for bombing the Egyptian Embassy in Islamabad, have threatened Pakistan that they will begin hijacking aircraft and carrying out actions that will place Pakistani airports at risk unless Pakistan stops its campaign against them.

After receiving these serious threats, the Pakistani Defense Ministry tightened security on many of its airports including the Islamabad, Lahore, and Karachi Airports and placed its security forces on a state of top alert.

At the same time, Pakistani civil aviation authorities were instructed to ensure that all incoming and departing flights were safe.

The Pakistani security forces were instructed to adopt immediate measures against any suspicious individual. Stricter identification measures have been adopted for foreign travelers and their movements are being closely watched.

Libya

Official Source Denies Visit of Iranian Official

LD1012095395 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 0735 GMT 10 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Tripoli, 10 Dec — An official source at the People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation made an announcement to the Libyan news agency that the news reports published by some Western media claiming that Hoseyn Sheykh ol-Eslam, the Iranian assistant foreign minister, had recently visited the Great Jamahiriyah were absolutely untrue.

The source said that this Iranian official had not visited the Great Jamahiriyah for years.

JANA Notes Disappointment With GCC Summit

LD0812145995 Tripoli JANA in English 1443 GMT 8 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Muscat, Al-Kanun [December] 8, JANA — The Summit of the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] concluded its activities in Muscat on Al-Kanun [December] 6. Qatar boycotted the final session due to the dispute over the appointment of the council's secretary general.

Observers have noted that the Gulf Summit disappointed and foiled the hopes and aspirations of the Arab masses in the Gulf. It also disappointed the hopes of the Arab nation as the summit did not tackle the Palestinian cause. It was as if the Gulf Cooperation Council is totally unconcerned about the Israeli occupation and the Israeli terrorist practices against the Palestinian people and the continued aggression against the Lebanese people. Disregard and indifference dealt a serious blow to both the Palestinian and Lebanese people.

The observers noted that the shock was worsened and that despondency prevailed when the final statement of the summit ignored nuclear threats caused by the Israelis and the dangers of the Israeli nuclear arsenal over all the states of the area.

In contrast the summit unjustifiably issued a resolution in respect of the need to eliminate Iraqi weapons of mass destruction without any indication whatsoever about the elimination of Israeli weapons of mass destruction or pressurising the Israelis to sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

At the same time, the summit expressed its regret about the resumption of production of biological weapons in Iraq.

The final statement did not tackle the rights of the Palestinian people and did not tackle the serious resolutions by the American Congress to transfer the American Embassy to Jerusalem. The statement neither confirmed that Jerusalem is the capital of the Palestinian people and did not confront the Israeli claim that Jerusalem is their eternal capital.

The observers concluded that those who met in Muscat have disregarded and abandoned many Arab causes and issues and even their internal affairs. Their only concern was distant issues deliberately fabricated by the West such as Afghanistan and Bosnia.

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Mauritania

Pro-Iraq Activists Receive Prison Sentences

AB0812171195 Libreville Africa No. 1 in French 1215 GMT 8 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] In Mauritania, the trial of the members of the pro-Ba'ath movement, who were accused of forming a secret illegal organization, has ended. The verdict given by the Nouakchott magistrate's court is rather lenient contrary to what was demanded by the prosecuting attorney. Here is Salem Mechbour Salem with a report:

[Begin Salem recording] The Nouakchott magistrate's court did not go along with the prosecuting attorney, who had demanded heavy sentences for the charges brought against the pro-Iraqi Ba'ath activists. The magistrate's court acquitted 33 of the 52 accused persons who had been appearing since 4 December. The 19 others received verdicts ranging from six-month suspended sentences to one year's imprisonment. This, notably, was the case of a group of eight personalities including former minister Khattry Ould Taleb Jiddou and Mauritanian businessman (Abdoulaye Ould Hamed), who is the former secretary general of the National Vanguard Party. The remaining 11 were handed down verdicts ranging from six months to one year's suspended sentences as well as fines of 10,000 to 30,000 ouguiyas — 30,000 ouguiyas amount to 166,000 CFA. Mohamed Yeddi Ould Breidelleil, former information minister and secretary general of the Mauritanian National Assembly, and (Memel Ould Ahmed), presidential adviser until his arrest in October, are among those who received suspended sentences.

It will be recalled that these personalities were arrested on 23 October following, what the Mauritanian authorities termed, a plot fomented by Iraq intended to destabilize the Nouakchott regime. According to the official version, the pro-Iraqis in Mauritania want to cause trouble for President Maaouya Ould Sid Ahmed Taya's regime by opposing any close ties with Israel. However, other sources say that the Mauritanian pro-Iraqis were arrested and prosecuted wrongly. [end recording]

Morocco

Iraqi Embassy Warned Against 'Expanding Activities'

NC0912171895 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi People in Arabic 1500 GMT 9 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Moroccan authorities have warned the [Iraqi] regime's embassy in Rabat about the recent expanding activities of its staff members that threaten Moroccan national security and target the security of Arab countries neighboring Morocco, namely Mauritania.

Diplomatic sources in Rabat said the Moroccan Foreign Ministry cautioned the regime's Ambassador Nadim al-Yasin last week that it had recently observed suspicious activity by members of his embassy staff and that embassy personnel made numerous visits to the south of the country without the permission or knowledge of Moroccan authorities.

The ministry emphasized that it will not allow Morocco to be an arena for subversive activity against neighboring countries and a place for interference in other countries' affairs, actions that contradict international and diplomatic norms.

Previous reports noted that the regime's embassy in Rabat had been tasked with carrying out subversive activities against Mauritania. This followed the deterioration of relations between Baghdad and Nouakchott and the expulsion of the regime's Ambassador Anwar Mawlud Dhiban from Mauritania. He was expelled because he interfered in Mauritania's internal affairs and ran a subversive network seeking to cause disturbance and chaos in Mauritania.

EFTA Accord To Establish Free Trade Area

LD0912153895 Rabat MAP in English 1222 GMT 9 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Zermat, Switzerland, Dec 9 (MAP) — Morocco and the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) signed here Thursday [7 December] a cooperation declaration identifying the cooperation fields that will phase in a free trade area between the two parties.

Four countries — Switzerland, Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein — remained in EFTA in January 1995 when Sweden, Austria, and Finland quit the association to integrate the European Union.

Morocco and EFTA decided to set up a joint committee to consider and identify the fields of cooperation the declaration is to provide for.

At the end of the signing ceremony, Moroccan Minister of Commerce, Industry and Handicraft Driss Jattou told the MOROCCAN NEWS AGENCY "MAP" the Zermat Accord is part of a Moroccan global strategy which aims at securing 'other outlets' than those provided for by the association accord with the European Union (EU).

He recalled that Morocco has already signed a similar convention namely with the United States of America opening prospects for the setting up of a free trade

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area and opened talks with Canada for the signing of a similar accord.

Sudan

Al-Bashir on Uganda, Arab Ties, Mideast Peace

JN1012120995 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 10 Dec 95 p 21

[Interview with President 'Umar Hasan al-Bashir by Chief Editor Nabil al-Sharif in Khartoum; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [al-Sharif] The rebellion in southern Sudan has recently taken serious dimensions in light of the interference of foreign forces and countries in favor of the rebellion.

What is the story of the Ugandan and Eritrean military interference in this issue? Are there any parties behind this interference?

To what extent does this interference constitute a direct threat to Sudan?

What is your explanation of Arab silence at this interference, which constitutes an aggression against the security and sovereignty of an Arab country and a threat to pan-Arab security?

[Al-Bashir] Uganda's support for the rebellion is an old issue. Garang does not fight a guerrilla warfare, but he is fighting with regular armies. This relationship between Uganda and Garang is an old one and Uganda cannot deny that it is the main supply line for Garang and that all hostile acts against Sudan are launched from its territory. However, the new development is that Ugandan soldiers this time entered in large numbers into Sudan. An entire Ugandan division, with a large number of heavy weapons and tanks, penetrated the international border and crossed many kilometers inside Sudan. This matter is well documented. Uganda is condemned for the movement of these heavy weapons and tanks into Sudan not to mention the Ugandan soldiers' entry into Sudan. We have written, video, and recorded documents. Had Sudan interfered in Uganda, all the countries which consider themselves the protectors of international legitimacy, would have come to Sudan. However, they are now participating, from behind the screen, in financing the rebellion and supplying it with weapons. We know that the military and economic potentials of Uganda do not allow it to plan such a huge action against Sudan. We also know the countries which declared that they will fight Sudan through its neighbors. However, this will not make us subservient to these arrogant states, which believe that the whole world should either submit to them or face destruction. The countries which refuse to succumb to the will of the arrogant ones will face destruction directly or indirectly.

We value the stand of the Arab countries which voiced support for Sudan, and we appreciate that declaring this support for Sudan is a fair and brave stand.

[Al-Sharif] The dispute with Egypt over the question of Hala'ib has been shelved. What is the latest about this problem and is it possible to reach a satisfactory solution to it?

[Al-Bashir] Egypt raises this issue whenever it wants to put pressure on Sudan. This is why Egypt is now harassing Sudan militarily to put pressure on Sudan in an open gesture of coordination with Uganda. Hala'ib is not an end in itself; it is a means to put pressure on Sudan. Had Egypt planned to resolve this issue, it would have done that. We offered Egypt several solutions. We offered it Arab, Islamic, or international arbitration. If Egypt is so sure about its legal and historical rights in the Sudanese province of Hala'ib, as it claims, then why does it not accept arbitration? Why did Egypt accept arbitration on Taba, which is only 1 km, and now wants Sudan to give up a piece of land that is tens of thousands of kilometers? Egypt would not even allow Sudan to claim its legal rights. This case is not the first of its kind. But there are legal documents in this case. We know that the question of Hala'ib is nothing more than a mask to hide Egypt's hostility toward Sudan. Egypt has established alliances with all Sudan's enemies at home and abroad. Egypt's declared objective is to topple the national government in Sudan. Egypt has launched an all-out campaign against Sudan on all levels. Militarily, Egypt has intervened in Hala'ib and imposed a military presence over there. Egypt also established alliances with anti-Sudan forces. It also hosted and opened offices for the rebellion movement, which is a terrorist movement whose declared objective is to carry out hostile actions and acts of sabotage against Sudan. Egypt also received and acquitted the hijacker of a Sudanese plane and did not extradite him to Sudan. It also made no secret of its readiness to welcome and host the Sudanese opposition, which has adopted a terrorist stand toward the government of Sudan. In addition to all of this, the Egyptian intelligence service has provided fabricated intelligence files to all nations to tarnish the image of Sudan. All these actions show that the Egyptian regime seeks to topple the government in Sudan and not allow any regime in Sudan to take over if this regime is based on Islam. This is because the Egyptian regime has regrettably categorized itself as "an enemy to Islam and Islamists".

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[Al-Sharif] How do you characterize your relations with Libya and what are the reasons for Libya's deportation of tens of thousands of Sudanese people?

[Al-Bashir] The Libyan deportation of some African and Arab citizens has nothing to do with the Sudanese-Libyan relationship. This issue is related to a domestic Libyan policy. We respect the sovereignty of other countries and their administrative decisions that seek to reorganize their domestic situation. It is true that integration between Sudan and Libya has not developed the way it was hoped, but relations between the two countries are normal and cordial.

[Al-Sharif] The fact that Sudan has embraced an Islamic system has placed Sudan on a collision course with Western nations. Some people accuse you of violating human rights, promoting Islamic extremism, and suppressing the opposition. How does Khartoum reply to the charges?

[Al-Bashir] These are hollow and false charges, and those who make them know this. The arrogant state has alliances with many Arab and African countries. It now knows that Sudan is the only country in which there are no political prisoners. Sudan released all the 36 political prisoners who were in its jails. This number is nothing compared with those in the jails of the allies of the arrogant state, such as Israel and Egypt. Nobody can compare Sudan with these countries, as Sudan does not refer civilians to military courts or demolish houses on the heads of people living in them. Sudanese opponents live inside Sudan while their parties announce that they seek to topple this government by force. They also speak to world media and write in world press without being exposed to any form of coercion. The situation in Sudan is very obvious and we do not need to defend human rights in Sudan. We know that our human rights record is better than the majority of the Third World countries and even better than the majority of the so-called civilized countries, led by the United States, who, more than others, makes allegations against and harbors hostility toward Sudan. [passage omitted]

[Al-Sharif] What is your government's stance vis-a-vis the Middle East peace process? If a comprehensive peace is realized between Israel and the Arab countries, are you ready to join the peace process and normalize relations with Israel?

[Al-Bashir] We do not believe that what is taking place in the Middle East is a peace process; it is a settlement which is not in favor of the Arab nation, Muslims, or Arabs. We do not trust Israel's seriousness in the endeavor toward peace; it is not serious in safeguarding the charters its concluded with the [Arab] countries. We believe that peace will only be achieved in accordance with the Israeli terms, and if it is achieved like that it will then be capitulation codenamed peace. We believe there will be no peace while Israel maintains its arrogant and racist nature and feels that it is superior to the Arab nation. Israel was established by coercing the Arab nation and usurping its territory. However, if peace prevails in the region and if it is comprehensive then we will decide in light of this. [passage omitted]

Iranian Military Delegation Pays Visit

NC0712171195 Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 3 Dec 95 p 9

[From "The Brothers' Page"]

[FBIS Translated Text] An Iranian delegation led by Deputy Defense Minister Mehdi Chamran visited Khartoum two weeks ago. The delegation included a team of military technicians headed by Colonel Reza Samimi, in charge of the Iranian Ordnance Industries Organization.

The Iranian delegation conducted an on-the-spot inspection of the fighting in the south following recent defeats inflicted on the front's forces. The delegation held talks with Sudanese officials concerning the implementation of the provisions of the military agreement that had been signed by al-Bashir and Iranian President Hashemi-Rafsanjani. The agreement grants the use of facilities to Iranian naval units at Sudan's Red Sea ports.

Defense Minister Hassan on Arab League Charter

EA0812202095 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in English 1500 GMT 8 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Defense Minister General Hasan 'Abd-al-Rahman, has called for invoking the Arab League charter that stipulates support for any member country in case of foreign attack.

Interviewed by the Qatari AL-RA'Y newspaper, the defense minister said that a number of delegations had been sent to some Arab countries to explain the dimensions of the recent Ugandan attack against Sudan. General Hasan commended the Qatari leadership and people's stand toward Sudan following the Ugandan infiltration, saying time would prove that Doha had constantly supported justice and was under a wise leadership that was aware of its Arab and Islamic duties. The defense minister reiterated that the Egyptian regime was implementing a hostile strategy against Sudan when it occupied the Sudanese Hala'ib area and prevented the arrival of drinking water to Sudanese policemen. General 'Abd-al-Rahman said that the Egyptian forces had been carrying out various forms of provocations against Sudan such as planting land mines along [word indistinct] latitude 22. He said that the Sudanese Government, contrary to the Egyptian regime, was not massing

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troops in the Hala'ib area, indicating that Sudan did not want to be involved in a military confrontation with Egypt. He said the differences between Sudan and Egypt could be solved through dialogue in the way adopted by Egypt regarding the Taba conflict [with Israel].

General 'Abd-al-Rahman pointed out that Egypt was now playing a role in the war in south Sudan, referring to a recent visit by Ugandan President Museveni to Cairo, and Egypt's transportation of the tanks used in the aggression against southern Sudan. He affirmed that the conspiracies against Sudan were aimed at aborting Sudan's Islamic project, asserting that Sudan would never relinquish implementation of its Islamic project.

Meanwhile, General 'Abd-al-Rahman affirmed that the Armed Forces were imposing full control of the operation zones in southern Sudan, especially at the areas recently attacked by the Ugandan forces. He denied allegations that the outlaws' movement had inflicted heavy casualties on the government forces, adding the outlaws' casualties were ten-fold that of the government forces.

Foreign Minister Seeks Improved Ties With Kuwait

EA1012201595 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 10 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister Ali Uthman Muhammad Taha has expressed the hope that relations between Sudan and the State of Kuwait will return to normal. During an interview for the Sudanese magazine AL-BILAD, he said that despite the fact that these relations were affected as a result of the Gulf crisis, Sudan's firm stance had always been based on respect for Kuwait's independence and sovereignty and the Kuwaiti people's right to determine their internal situation as they wished. The foreign minister said Sudanese-Kuwaiti relations were stable and based on mutual respect, the full realization of each state's own affairs, cooperation, and mutual assistance on international and regional forums. He added that despite the crisis, popular and principled relations between the two countries have continued to exist.

Meanwhile, Foreign Minister Mr. Ali Uthman Muhammad Taha has described the crisis between Sudan and Egypt as a typical image of the policies designed to keep the Arab region in thrall, policies based on sowing differences between neighboring countries.

Al-Bashir Attends Popular Defense Forces Ceremony

EA1012201095 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 10 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Lieutenant General 'Umar Hasan Ahmad al-Bashir, president of the Republic, this morning attended at the Green Field in Khartoum the graduation ceremony of the Khartoum State recruits trained by the Usamah Ibn Zayd sixth course on popular defense. Also present were Professor Ibrahim Ahmad 'Umar, the minister for higher education and scientific research; Brigadier Muhammad al-Hasan al-Fadil, commander of the Popular Defense Forces [PDF]; a number of ministers; senior officers of the People's Armed Forces; and a large number of the trainees' relatives. The trainees performed military displays.

The PDF commander, Brigadier Muhammad al-Hasan al-Fadil, told our radio reporter that the PDF were proud of having trained over 22,000 recruits in various camps throughout Sudan. He said the graduation ceremonies would continue well after 15 December. He said that Khartoum State camps had 7,000 recruits. They had been trained for 45 days, during which they had undergone military, spiritual, and cultural courses. They had also participated in the building of university towns. Their presence in the camps had coincided with the nation's campaign to foil the recent aggression against our country. They had also seen their fathers rushing out to defend god's religion and the mighty convoys organized by our people to provide rations for the fighters. He said the PDF were proud of these trainees as constituting a basic unit of the forces prepared to die for the homeland.

Al-Bashir Urges Youth To Join Popular Defense Forces

EA0812215095 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 0430 GMT 8 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Staff Lieutenant General 'Umar Hasan Ahmad al-Bashir, the president of the Republic, has ended a two-day visit to West Kordofan State [in central Sudan] during which he visited al-Fulah, (Lagawa), al Nuhud, (al-Resh) and al-Mujlad, where he received pledges of allegiance once again from the citizens. He also addressed mass rallies and inaugurated a number of installations in the state.

He stressed the need for the youth to join the Popular Defense Forces camps, and said: We will provide weapons to those fit to carry them for the sake of defending the faith and the motherland. Staff Lieutenant General al-Bashir affirmed the readiness to train horsemen in Bahr al-Arab rural area, and pointed out that the establishment of training camps angers the enemies of Islam. His Excellency referred to the role of the sons of the area in routing the rebellion. His Excellency addressed a mass rally in al-Mujlad town yesterday evening [7 December]. [passage omitted]

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Al-Bashir: Nation Has Overcome Internal Differences

EA0712125895 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 6 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Lieutenant General 'Umar Hasan Ahmad al-Bashir, president of the Republic, has declared that Sudan has transcended its internal differences after the unification of efforts to strive toward building a model state of Sudan. He told a mass rally this afternoon in al-Nuhud town during his current tour of western Kordofan that the enemies were waylaying the country because of Sudan's political independence, its self-reliance, and rejection of injustice and aggression which target its civilizational project.

His Excellency called on the sons of the Sudanese people to join the ranks of the People's Defense Forces and the armed forces to defend the faith and the homeland. Lieutenant General al-Bashir reviewed the aims of applying federal rule in the country which are represented by decentralizing power to the citizens and to curtail the administrative shadow [as heard]. [passage omitted]

Government Accused of Chemical Weapons Attacks

NC0712171995 Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 3 Dec 95 p 9

[From "The Brothers' Page"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Sudanese opposition has accused the Sudanese Government of using chemical weapons against southern towns.

In a statement distributed in Cairo, the al-Ummah party, the main opposition faction, said that aircraft piloted by Iraqis dropped chemical bombs on [Namang] and Kaduqli, 600 km south of Khartoum.

The statement pointed out that Sudanese aircraft strafed the areas of Hayban and [Tilish] on 19 September.

Minister: Armed Forces Control Area of Operations

EA0812121595 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 07 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Defense Minister Lieutenant General Hassan 'Abd-al-Rahman has confirmed that the Armed Forces are in full control in the areas of operations, particularly in the area penetrated by Ugandan forces recently. In an interview with a correspondent of the Qatari newspaper, AL-RA'Y, he said the aggression that occurred represented an international conspiracy whose implementation has started from Uganda. He explained that Sudan had information that the so-called new international order granted Uganda a greater role, to invade Sudan militarily. He said the recent Ugandan invasion was by the Fourth Division of the Ugandan Army with assistance from the rebels, who represented only 20 percent of the aggressor force. He said tanks that participated in the aggression were transported from Asmara to Uganda by Egyptian aircraft.

The defense minister said the number of Ugandans listed as killed amounted to 263, and the dead also included Eritreans. He said there were documents with the Sudanese Army showing that Eritreans had participated in the operations. An Eritrean officer was captured at the front, but he died of his wounds before arrival in Khartoum. The Sudanese forces also killed two [word indistinct] whose identity was not specified. (?He pointed out that) there were mercenaries with the aggressors.

Official Denies Rebels Control Kapoeta Province

EA0912170695 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 0430 GMT 9 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Major 'Abdallah Allah Jabu Mursal, commissioner of Kapoeta Province, has denied reports that the province is besieged by scattered rebel remnants. He said in a statement to our radio correspondent that these allegations are being circulated by mass media hostile to Sudan, and are part of a continuous chain of fabrications and lies issued by the rebellion, which is living in desperate conditions due to the successive defeats it has suffered recently, and because of the voluntary return of citizens from the rebel movement.

The commissioner said that life is going on normally, and that citizens are getting on with their work. Moreover, Kapoeta town is witnessing constant activity on the part of the state government, the Legislative Assembly, and the citizens, who are busying themselves with the political programs, and the meeting on the national congress in Kapoeta.

National Congress To Convene 1 Jan

EA0912171095 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 0430 GMT 9 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Major General al-Zubayr Muhammad Salih, the first vice president of the Republic and chairman of the higher committee responsible for preparing for the national congress, has said that the congress will convene on 1 January to coincide with the 40th anniversary celebrations of the country's independence.

His Excellency directed the governors and the secretaries of the state conferences to mobilize the citizens politically to complete the building of the political system with the holding of the national congress, which is

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regarded as the highest political authority in the country.

Preparations and arrangements for the congress, which will be attended by about 5,000 members from the various states of Sudan in addition to invited guests from some sisterly and friendly states, are currently under way. Various specialized committees have been set up to carry out the preparations, and they are continuing their meetings at the National Congress Secretariat.

Western Sahara

Polisario Rejects UN Measures on Electoral Lists

LD1012103895 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 0600 GMT 10 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Polisario [Popular Front for the Liberation of Saquia El Hamra and Rio de Oro] had yesterday rejected the new UN measures concerning the drawing up of the electoral lists for those taking part in the self-determination referendum in Western Sahara.

Mohamed Abdelaziz, Polisario secretary general and president of the Saharan Arab Democratic Republic, in a message to the president of the UN Security Council, stressed that the Polisario cannot take part in the process of drawing up the electoral lists on the basis of the new measure and would not recognize the subsequent results.

The Saharan official asked the Security Council to shoulder its responsibilities vis-a-vis the settlement process and to chose either to ensure the conditions for an impartial referendum for the Saharan people or to give them an opportunity for an election period.

It is worth mentioning that the self-determination referendum scheduled for 1992 was postponed several times because of differences between the Morocco and the Polisario Front over the criteria for drawing up the electoral lists for those taking part in the self-determination referendum in Western Sahara.

Warns Will 'Reconsider' Commitment to Peace

LD0912075795 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 0600 GMT 9 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Polisario Front yesterday warned that it would withdraw and suspend its participation in the Western Sahara settlement if the UN Security Council endorsed a resolution that would allow changes in electoral measures.

Polisario representative to the United Nations yesterday sent a message to the president of the Security Council warning that if the resolution was endorsed, Polisario Front would reconsider its commitments within the [peace] settlement in the Western Sahara.

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Qatar

Government Steps Up 'Dispute' With GCC States

Hints at Suspension of Membership

MM0812170495 London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI in Arabic 8 Dec 95 p 1

[Unattributed report: "Qatar Hints at Suspension of Its GCC Membership, Blames Saudi Arabia for Abandoning 'Brotherly Approach'"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Doha, Dubai, AL-QUDS Al-'ARABI — Qatar yesterday stepped up its dispute with the Gulf states following its sudden withdrawal from the final session of the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] summit in Muscat.

Official Qatari sources have stressed to AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI that Qatar's protest is attributable not to the dispute over the person of Jamil al-Hujaylan, Saudi candidate for the post of GCC secretary general, but, rather, the Saudi method of imposing this candidate and ignoring the Qatari candidate, 'Abd-al-Rahman al-'Atiyah, who was nominated for the post long before al-Hujaylan. A Qatari official, who asked to remain anonymous, has said that "it is a serious precedent that could be a prelude to taking more serious and important decisions in the same manner."

Hinting at the possibility of Doha's suspending its membership, the official added that "Qatar cannot accept such a method at present or in the future. There should be equality in terms of duties and rights among all GCC members."

Diplomats based in Doha have said that "the Qataris are also angry because of the drafting committee's refusal to added a clause to the final statements promising humanitarian aid to the Iraqi people, who have been harmed by the international sanctions." [passage omitted]

Says No Decision Yet on Membership

LD0912191495 Doha Radio Qatar in Arabic 1800 GMT 9 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] His Excellency Shaykh Hamad Bin-Jasim Bin-Jabr Al Thani, the foreign minister, has announced that the State of Qatar has not yet decided about freezing its membership or withdrawing its membership in the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC].

In a news conference he held in Doha this evening, he expressed the hope that the question of the GCC secretary general will be solved with an objective view and pointed to a legal reference. He said that before that there was a fraternal solution that had not been given a chance.

His excellency said that he will attend the upcoming meeting of the Damascus Declaration members states and will attend all the Gulf meetings, and that if he found that Jamil al-Hujaylan was present, then it will be up to the ministers to choose between him and al-Hujaylan until the problem was solved.

His excellency said that he will attend the Damascus Declaration foreign affairs minister's upcoming meeting, and will attend all the Gulf meetings, and if he found Jamil al-Hujaylan present, the ministers should choose between him and al-Hujaylan, until the problem was resolved.

His Excellency Shaykh Hamad Bin-Jasim Bin-Jabr Al Thani said in his news conference, which was attended by representatives of Arab and foreign newspapers and agencies, that no contacts had taken place between the State of Qatar and any of the GCC countries since Qatar's withdrawal from the final session of the Gulf countries' summit, which was held in Muscat last Wednesday.

His excellency stressed in his reply to a question about the strength of relations between the State of Qatar and the Sultanate of Oman and the State of the United Arab Emirates, by pointing out that relations with the two fraternal countries were larger than the size of the problem that emerged in the Muscat meeting, and that the State of Qatar endeavored not to loose the friend, and repair its relations with everyone.

His excellency the foreign minister reviewed the circumstances surrounding the selection of the Gulf Cooperation Council secretary general, recalling that Qatar had submitted a memorandum to the General Secretariat expressing the State of Qatar's wish to nominate a Qatari national for the post of the council's secretary general, which was circulated among the member states.

His excellency pointed out that one of the states had objected and another put forward reasons based on the existence of an agreement on appointments for the post to be made in an alphabetical order. However, the State of Qatar stated at the foreign ministers meeting that there had not been a prior agreement on alphabetical order, that it had not been applied to those who had held posts at the council, and that when it was the State of Qatar's turn they decided to apply the alphabetical order.

His excellency the minister said that the foreign ministers agreed to refer the issue to the Muscat summit.

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To Boycott Meetings Attended by Saudi

JN0912173795 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1714 GMT 9 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Qatar will boycott all future meetings of the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC], in which new Saudi GCC Secretary General Jamil Hujaylan will take part. This was announced by Qatari Foreign Minister Shaykh Hamad Bin-Jasim Al Thani at a news conference he gave minutes ago. He said if they want the Qatari foreign minister to attend a meeting, they should ask Jamil Hujaylan to depart from it, but if they stick to Hujaylan, the Qatari minister will boycott the meeting.

The minister added that Qatar is unwilling to abandon the GCC. We recall that Qatari Amir Shaykh Hamad Bin-Khalifah Al Thani boycotted the final session of the GCC in Muscat last Wednesday because of the appointment of Hujaylan instead of Qatar's candidate 'Abd-al-Rahman al-'Atiyah.

Minister Says Saudi Border Issue 'Almost Over'

JN1012150195 Al-Dammam AL-YAWM in Arabic 6 Dec 95 p 1

[Report by Falih al-Sughayyar in Muscat]

[FBIS Translated Text] Qatari Foreign Minister Shaykh Hamad Bin-Jabr Bin-Jasim Al Thani has praised the leading role of King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, custodian of the two holy mosques, may God preserve him, as well as his eagerness to resolve all issues among the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] member states.

In an exclusive statement to AL-DAMMAM AL-YAWM, the Qatari foreign minister said the custodian of the two holy mosques is using his weight and his leading role to resolve all issues among the GCC member states. The Qatari minister pointed out that the border issue between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Qatar is almost over, thanks to the wisdom of the custodian of the two holy mosques in overcoming every possible obstacle.

Shaykh Hamad then denied the existence of any economic agreement between Qatar and Israel. He said that the Qatari Government and a U.S. company agreed to export Qatari gas, but that the said company has signed a contract with the Israeli Government to export part of that gas to Israel during the next few years. The Qatari minister described the atmosphere that prevailed during the Gulf summit conference as conducive to optimism.

Saudi Arabia

Crown Prince Assesses Outcome of GCC Summit

LD0812153595 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Kingdom Radio Network in Arabic 1430 GMT 8 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] His Royal Highness Prince 'Abdallah Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al-Sa'ud, crown prince, deputy prime minister and commander of the national guard, has described the 16th Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] Summit as particularly important in the climate of international and regional changes. He said: The summit should be considered jointly with the changes of our times in scientific, political, economic, and human developments. This was stated in a comprehensive interview given by the crown prince to the Omani news agency.

The crown prince further said that Saudi Arabia's desire to resolve various aspects of disputes between the GCC member countries emanates from King Fahd's sincere feelings and those of the kingdom, leadership and people, toward its brethren in the Gulf states.

Outcome of GCC Summit, Agreement Viewed

LD0912003195 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Kingdom Radio Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 8 Dec 95

["News and comment" by Husyan al-Askari, read by Bakr Bakhaybar]

[FBIS Translated Text] Arab and foreign reactions to the outcome of the GCC [Gulf Cooperation Council] summit conference have come to the same conclusion: The GCC member-states know what they want and take consciously and efficiently the necessary measures in order to boost their solidarity.

In any negotiations, parties should seek to find something upon which they can agree in order to be able to proceed with their negotiations. In the GCC case, it is obvious that member-states have something in common and therefore there is no need to strife unnecessarily to find it.

There are a number of elements which bond together the GCC member-states in addition to their actual membership of the council: They are linked by blood, religion, and common fate. These are very strong bonds which should constitute the bases for the talks between brethren.

It natural, however, that in order to reach an understanding on how to draw up a framework for an agreement for closer cooperation there must be some kind of concessions by the parties trying to reach an agreement. It is common sense, therefore, to assume that agreements

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can only be reached when parties to them are prepared to relinquish what experts of international law term "a part of their sovereign decision" to the benefit of others in order that all parties can reach priceless accord.

It is plausible, however, to say that the GCC member-states, given their strong bonds and good intentions, do not need reciprocal concessions that could be detrimental to their sovereign decision in order to reach an unanimous agreement as all of them were putting their resources in the service of a common choice. A fact which refutes what some foreign sources, ignorant of the true nature of bondage between brethren in the GCC member-states, claimed that the outcome of the Muscat summit conference was reached on a platform of a compromise rather than an agreement.

This is untrue. The Muscat summit conference's resolutions were taken in unanimous manner. However, talks on a number of topics were postponed not because of a dispute but to allow more time for discussion. This a healthy condition for it prevents unworkable agreements from being taken.

Magazine Praises Results of GCC Summit

LD0912173295 Riyadh SPA in Arabic
1115 GMT 9 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Riyadh, 9 Dec — A Saudi magazine lauded the results of the 16th summit of the leaders of the Gulf Cooperation Council states which ended in the Omani capital last Wednesday [6 December] with a consensus on all the essential issues.

AL-YAMAMAH magazine said in today's issue that those who examine closely the results of the Muscat summit would notice that the Cooperation Council states did not disagree on any of the main issues on the agenda.

The magazine reviewed the contents of the summit's final communique's firm stance regarding Iraq and supporting the UAE's stance on its legal rights of sovereignty over the Gulf islands occupied by Iran in addition to the Council's states stance regarding the peace process in the Middle East and the important issue of the phenomenon of terrorism.

It said about this issue: "The intensive talks resulted in what looks like a framework of action to combat this phenomenon and contain its dangers."

AL-YAMAMAH pointed out that the summit confirmed the unity of perception in the Gulf regarding various international issues such as the Bosnia-Herzegovina issue, the elimination of weapons of mass destruction, and international economic cooperation.

It said: "The Gulf leaders' consensus on all the issues which are the major topics of the region's concerns confirms that the Muscat summit is an addition to the progress towards unity, cooperation, and integration which began when the Cooperation Council was set up in the 1980's."

Gulf Urged 'Solidarity To Counter Iranian Plots'

NC1012101695 Paris AFP in English
0936 GMT 10 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Riyadh, Dec 10 (AFP)—The Saudi newspaper 'UKAZ on Sunday [10 December] accused Iran of trying to divide the Gulf Arab countries and promote tension in the region.

Official Iranian radio said the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) showed at its summit in Muscat last week that it was increasingly divided and unable to formulate a policy for its six Gulf Arab members.

Qatar walked out of the final session in a dispute over the appointment of a Saudi as secretary general of the GCC — which is made up of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Oman.

'UKAZ, which reflects official thinking here, charged that Iran sought to "interfere in a flagrant way in the affairs of the Gulf countries" and "to divide these countries" and "poison their relations."

The article was entitled: "Solidarity to counter Iranian plots."

'UKAZ accused Iran of seeking to "maintain the Gulf region in a permanent state of tension. Those who hope for a division in the ranks of the GCC will be surprised to see their wishes are impossible to achieve."

The GCC summit reaffirmed the UAE's sovereignty over three Gulf islands also claimed by Iran — Abu Musa, Greater Tunb and Lesser Tunb — and accused Tehran of not answering UAE calls to settle the dispute.

Paper: Islands To Stay Arab 'Despite Iranian Arrogance'

NC1112115295 Paris AFP in English
1055 GMT 11 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Riyadh, Dec 11 (AFP)—Three strategic Gulf islands will remain Arab "despite Iranian arrogance," a Saudi newspaper vowed Monday [11 December] after Iran said it was prepared to fight an 80-year war to defend them.

"The Iranian official's remarks reveal Tehran's hegemonic aims," according to the AL-NADWAH newspaper which usually reflects the official view here.

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The Iranian navy's deputy commander rear admiral 'Abbas Mohtaj told the weekly KEYHAN-E HAVA'I published Sunday in Tehran that Iran was "ready for an 80-year war to defend its islands in the Gulf."

But the Saudi newspaper replied: "These islands will remain Arab despite Iranian arrogance."

It denounced "the stubborness and threats of war made by Tehran in a bid to continue its occupation of the Arab islands." [passage omitted]

Yemen

Ruling Coalition 'Crisis' Reportedly Continues

Minister of Trade Resigns

NC0912214395 Paris AFP in English 1922 GMT 9 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Sanaa, Dec 9 (AFP)—Yemen's supply and trade minister, at the centre of a crisis in the country's ruling coalition, on Saturday [9 December] handed in his resignation.

Muhammad Ahmad Ifandi and his deputy 'Abd-al-Majid al-Mikhlafi, both of the fundamentalist Al-Islah party, handed in their notice to Prime Minister 'Abd-al-'Aziz 'Abd-al-Ghani, a member of the General People's Congress (GPC) party.

They said in their resignation letters that they had been "stripped of their prerogatives and are no longer in a position to fulfil their responsibilities" in the ministry, a member of Al-Islah said.

He did not say whether their resignations had been accepted.

A public row broke out in August between the GPC of President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih and Al-Islah over the running of the supply and trade ministry.

The GPC accused Ifandi of using his post to profit his party, and employing Al-Islah militants instead of government workers to distribute rations of wheat and flour to the public.

In their letters, Ifandi and his deputy said they were no longer in a position to "supervise the distribution of basic foodstuffs in line with ministry rules."

They also accused unnamed "parties and influential people" of "interference hindering the running of the ministry."

Sources close to Al-Islah said the party's leaders and their GPC counterparts were in contact to try to "avoid a crisis between the two members of the coalition."

'Dispute' Seen Escalating

NC1012175895 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1410 GMT 10 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Sanaa, 10 Dec (MENA)—Yemen is now experiencing a governmental dispute that culminated yesterday with the resignation of Dr. Muhammad Ifandi, minister of trade and supply. With that resignation, the public dispute escalated between the Reform Grouping and the General People's Congress [GPC] parties, who have been sharing power in Yemen since October 1994.

Last night's surprise announcement by Dr. Ifandi and his deputy Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid al-Mikhlafi—through international news agencies operating in Yemen—was made without consulting the Council of Ministers; and the GPC release of an urgent denunciation statement escalated the situation further.

Differences between the two main parties in Yemen have worsened over the past months because they have many contradicting stands.

Knowledgeable circles in Sanaa say Yemen's official participation in the Amman economic summit last month triggered a dispute between the two parties. The Reform Grouping attacked the principle of participation in the summit because it held that the conference was a form of normalization with Israel and a prelude to further steps.

The knowledgeable circles in the Yemeni capital explained that President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih's announcement last month on making Aden a free port, working to normalize the situation in the city, and restoring stability to its residents after the destruction and deterioration that city saw during the 1994 civil war caused disagreement between the two partners of power.

Extremist elements within the Reform party believe that turning Aden into a free port, attracting foreign investments, and reviving the economy and tourism in the city will revive tourist areas and tours and reopen the brewery. These are the very places that these elements destroyed and burned after the government forces entered the city.

These circles said the Yemeni president's objection to a draft law on Islamic banks and the use of his constitutional powers in returning the bill to parliament for discussion was one cause of the crisis. Members of the Reform Grouping support this bill with all their weight. Moreover, some banks have actually begun to employ the bill before a law in its final form is passed.

The knowledgeable circles said that the differences between the two parties, the Reform Grouping and

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the GPC, also involve issues and priorities of solving Yemen's economic problems, as well as bases of dealing with international organizations.

These circles said that the main dispute between the two parties remains. Recently the government forwarded a plan to unify the educational system in Yemen and to end the existing double standard. This move is strongly opposed by the Reform Party, which owns a special educational institution—called "Educational Institutes"— and runs it with complete independence from the Education Ministry. These institutes provide elementary- through university-level education.

They added that people have described these educational institutes as mills to hatch party cadres and that they adopt radical ideas and work in favor of a particular religious trend.

President, Higher Election Committee Hold Meeting

JN1112072895 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0430 GMT 11 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, president of the republic, met with the head and members of the Higher Election Committee in Aden yesterday. Talks dealt with various issues related to the committee's preparations for parliamentary elections, the committee's general budget, and the formation of an electoral body.

The head of the Higher Election Committee presented a report to the president dealing with the tasks carried out by the committee since it was formed. The president urged the head and members of the Higher Election Committee to speed up preparations for the parliamentary elections, finalize all documents dealing with the elections, form a permanent electoral body in all constituencies in coordination with the parties concerned, and ensure that all voters receive an election card. He also urged them to cut back on expenditure, and to benefit from the available cadres and capabilities as dictated by the public interest.

Moreover, the president called for endorsing the committee's general budget as conceived by the committee and for giving this committee a financial and administrative independence. He also called for providing the committee with all requirements so that it can carry out its tasks and prepare for the elections in the best possible way.

Salih Threatens Early Elections

JN1112073895 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0515 GMT 11 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Sanaa—During a meeting with the Higher Election Committee in Aden yesterday, Yemeni President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih said that he will call for early parliamentary elections in the country if the Yemeni Reform Group [YRG] chooses to withdraw from the current coalition government.

Salih urged the committee to expeditiously prepare for the parliamentary elections slated to be held in April 1997, complete the preparation of all documents pertaining to elections, keep the election apparatus constantly manned, and to coordinate with the competent agencies in this regard in order to ensure representation in all election constituencies in the country.

In a related development, the General People's Congress [GPC] ruling in Yemen has expressed its astonishment over the fact that the YRG, which is its coalition partner, has announced the resignation of the supply minister and his deputy before the resignations were tendered to the prime minister.

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Husayn Kamil Proposes 'Draft Plan of Action'

Says Plan Aims at 'Rescuing Iraq'

NC0912165195 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi People in Arabic 1500 GMT 9 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] General Husayn Kamil has asserted that he distributed to Iraqi opposition leaders a draft plan of action to be carried out by the proposed higher council for the salvation of Iraq. He said his action aims to reach a final formula.

In a hand-written statement distributed to international media, Gen. Kamil said he has begun to distribute the draft plan of action to Iraqi nationalist parties, organizations, and personalities so that he may understand their views to finalize the plan of action.

Gen. Husayn Kamil, Saddam's son-in-law, explained that the plan of action contains four sections—an introduction, the basic goals, the general principles, and the transition policy. He noted that these four parts are connected with the aim of rescuing Iraq and drawing up the features of its future.

The plan stresses that the new political regime should be free, democratic, and parliamentary, based on political pluralism and peaceful rotation of power. It also asserted the unity of Iraqi territories and people, recognizing the rights of ethnic groups and minorities, and dealing with the Kurd issue in a manner commensurate with its national weight.

He remarked that the formation of the higher council will not cancel other political movements, organizations, and parties and will not go beyond their struggle and national role. Rather, he said, it will open the door to all nationalist forces and personalities working together to rescue Iraq.

Distributes 'Manifesto' to Opposition Groups

NC0812203795 Paris AFP in English 1950 GMT 8 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Amman, Dec 8 (AFP) — Iraqi defector General Husayn Kamil Hasan said Friday [8 December] he had handed out copies of his political manifesto to opposition parties in a bid to form a joint front against President Saddam Husayn.

Hasan said the draft political programme "was being distributed to Iraqi parties, organisations and national dignitaries with a view to exchanging notes with them for its completion."

The guidelines, comprising of 66 articles, are aimed at "salvaging Iraq on one hand and charting the future course of this country on the other," Hasan said in a statement sent to AFP.

"It stresses that a future regime should be free, parliamentary and democratic based on political pluralism and peaceful transfer of power with an emphasis on Iraq's integrity and the rights of minorities," he said.

The general, a son-in-law of Saddam who defected to Jordan on August 8, was careful to stress that a planned Council for the Salvation of Iraq would not try to replace the "national role" of existing opposition groups.

Hasan, the architect of Iraq's advanced weapons programmes, said last month that a council would be formed "soon" grouping opponents both inside and outside the country. He said it would work "towards toppling the ruling junta in Baghdad and saving the Iraqi people from their plight."

Oppositionist on Husayn Kamil's 'Plan of Action'

NC0912204695 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Arabic 1730 GMT 9 Dec 95

[Interview with Sami Faraj 'Ali, member of a new opposition grouping, by 'Isam Hasan; place and date not given—live or recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Hasan] Mr. 'Ali, AFP has reported that General Husayn Kamil published a plan of action to rescue Iraq. What do you know about this plan of action?

['Ali] In fact, it was Nabil al-Janabi, who lives in London and is in contact with Jordanian authorities who devised this plan and sent the initial draft to officials in Jordan.

In a telephone conversation between the two men, Husayn Kamil asked to see the text of this plan. He was told that it was just for his information, not for publication.

After Mash'an al-Juburi and Salah 'Umar 'Ali al-Tikriti joined Husayn Kamil and learned of the plan, minor changes were made to it. The plan was then attributed to Husayn Kamil in a statement made by Husayn Kamil's brother, Saddam Kamil, to AL-HAYAH newspaper. This angered Jordanian authorities as well as Nabil al-Janabi in London.

The issue was discussed by al-Janabi and King Husayn at a meeting in London during the king's recent visit. Indeed, King Husayn rebuked Husayn Kamil for stealing this plan and launching it through the media before it was mature and before Jordanian authorities could announce it at a conference in Jordan.

Then, based on advice from Salah 'Umar 'Ali al-Tikriti, Husayn Kamil sought to preclude the planned Amman conference by acting ahead of the others and taking

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credit for the plan along with al-Tikriti, even though he, Husayn Kamil, had nothing to do with the plan.

One of those who helped Husayn Kamil on this was Sabah Salman, Saddam Husayn's former press secretary, who defected to northern Iraq and then sneaked into Jordan via Syria. He now works with Husayn Kamil.

The plan that was proposed by Husayn Kamil did not meet any response from Iraqi opposition figures. Moreover, those who received the plan from Husayn Kamil did so for their information rather than in their capacity as partners or as having influence in the issue.

In fact, Husayn Kamil is seen as losing card among the Iraqi opposition. To clarify, he demonstrated this when he attacked all the opposition factions, showing his failure and inability to penetrate the Iraqi opposition's ranks.

According to our information, Husayn Kamil's current relationship with Jordanian authorities is negative. The Jordanians blame Husayn Kamil for several reasons. Among them is his contacts with Syria behind their backs through the delegation he sent there comprised of Salah al-Tikriti and Mash'an al-Juburi. The Jordanians also blame him for his contacts with Saudi Arabia without Jordan's coordination by Salah 'Umar 'Ali al-Tikriti's visit to Riyadh.

Also, Riyadh passed on to Jordanian authorities the information that Salah 'Umar 'Ali al-Tikriti had conveyed on behalf of Husayn Kamil. Further, Husayn Kamil released the first trial balloon on the formation of a higher salvation council, which does not exist and has no foundation. The second trial balloon released by Husayn Kamil was that an Iraqi opposition radio would be established aimed at Iraq, not from Jordan, but from Syria.

These trial balloons, acts, and telephone calls by Husayn Kamil, in addition to his claim that he opposes the plan being promoted by King Husayn on a tripartite reconciliation or federalism in Iraq...[sentence incomplete as heard]. Husayn Kamil claims that he could be compelled to return to Iraq and give himself up to Saddam Husayn rather than accept King Husayn's plan. These acts and statements isolated Husayn Kamil from Jordan, the country that is protecting him.

This is the information available to us about this plan and Husayn Kamil's link with Jordanian authorities. In addition, there is some coolness between Husayn Kamil and Salah 'Umar 'Ali al-Tikriti, who has returned to London and now lives there. He claims that he had a disagreement with Husayn Kamil but did not explain to us the reasons. Also, it has been reported that he personally attacked Salah 'Umar 'Ali al-Tikriti after the brief encounter that recently brought them together in Amman.

Sunni, Shiite Oppositionists Oppose Federation Plan

MM0812160595 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 8 Dec 95 p 3

[Unattributed report: "Two Iraqi Shiite and Sunni Groups Oppose Jordanian Federation Project"]

[FBIS Translated Text] London, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT — One Shiite and one Sunni Iraqi Islamic group opposed to Iraqi President Saddam Husayn's government have opposed the so-called "Jordanian proposal" to establish a federation in Iraq between Shiites, Sunnis, and Kurds and a Jordanian-Iraqi confederation.

In a statement a copy of which AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT has received, the Islamic Movement in Iraq, led by Shiite cleric Muhammad Mahdi al-Khalisi, said that "the call to form a federation is a direct call to partition Iraq...and part of the Zionist plan to partition the Arab and Islamic states, a plan intended to cause the whole region to explode," stressing that "the Iraqi people have not had conflicts between their Shiite, Sunni, and Kurdish sons and thus do not need a reconciliation to take place between them." The statement urged "all loyal Iraqis to ignore and reject such projects and to reaffirm Iraq's unity as a homeland and people."

In an independent statement, the Islamic Bloc in Iraq, which includes Sunni groups and figures, said that it has received "with pride, admiration, and optimism the bold statements made by (Jordanian Monarch) King Husayn to stand by the side of the Iraqi people and his sympathetic feelings toward them.... We were, however, surprised, and so were the Iraqi people, by the call attributed to him to establish federal entities for sectarian and racial purposes."

The statement added: "Iraq is certainly not willing to be partitioned along sectarian and racial lines because its components have interacted, cohabited, and interspersed in every region.... Therefore the establishment of federations along sectarian and racial lines would result in a wide-ranging and devastating ethnic cleansing whose virus could spread to other states."

Details of Husayn Kamil Defection Revealed

96LH0033A Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic 10 Nov 95 pp 32-33

[Report by Walid Abu-Dhahr]

[FBIS Translated Text] The secret of the moment in which Husayn Kamil Hasan, son-in-law of President Saddam Husayn, decided to defect to Jordan is still

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unknown after four months. It is true that Husayn Kamil's defection with his brother Saddam and their two wives came at the height of the rise to prominence of President Saddam Husayn's eldest son, 'Udayy, but the direct reason that prompted them to defect is still unknown.

During the month that preceded the defection decision, when strongman 'Ali Hasan al-Majid, President Saddam Husayn's cousin, was removed from the Defense Ministry and a professional military officer, Staff Lieutenant General Sultan Hashim Ahmad, was appointed in his place, the Iraqis were openly asking who was governing Iraq? Was it Saddam or 'Udayy?

Knowledgeable people say that Husayn Kamil sensed the danger and realized that the president was removing all the strong men who could stand in 'Udayy's way of becoming an absolute ruler. They say that the president was becoming a mystic and was turning into a "general guide" who was not interested in temporal matters.

To understand Husayn Kamil's feelings and sentiments, we must return to the period when 'Udayy was experiencing his golden age and rising to prominence at the expense of everyone else in the regime.

'Udayy has assumed control of the information, culture, and sports sectors. He published BABIL and AL-BA'TH AL-RIYADI newspapers and established the youth's television and radio. BABIL became the thermometer for measuring the satisfaction with this or that official. 'Udayy also assumed an "important" task of setting up the wall posters and monuments for his father on a wide scale. He then established the Iraqi cultural grouping, which included 13 societies, associations, unions, and benevolent organizations. He placed all the activities of the journalists, artists, writers, intellectuals, and athletes under his personal supervision.

At a time when Saddam [as published] controlled the propaganda, information, cultural, and social machines, his internal economic machine was growing in a terrifying manner.

The blockade economy became his pet. He monopolized most of the import activities, from cigarettes, food, to spare parts. He established companies with Jordanian, Turkish, and Iranian partners. The most prominent of these was his partnership with Mehdi and Yaser, sons of Iranian President Hashemi-Rafsanjani. This company played a major role in breaking the international blockade against Iraq. The company exported Iraqi cement, dates, and oil. 'Udayy's foreign currency income from this trade has been estimated at more than $500,000 per day.

'Udayy's control of the "water tap" enabled him to mobilize supporters from all circles and levels. His generosity extended to army officers to win their loyalty. He then established the "Saddam Fedayeen" brigades and recruited tens of thousands of educated youths. He deployed these well-trained, well-armed, and well-equipped commandos to protect the regime.

Husayn Kamil watched what was going on with concern, but he always followed the current. Some $12 billion of liquid funds, $16 billion in strategic stockpiles of raw materials, and $4 billion in medicines were sufficient for 'Udayy to manage his big trade business and buy loyalties.

Knowledgeable people say that 'Udayy then started looking at the estimated $15 billion in Iraqi funds, which Husayn Kamil controlled. These funds were deposited in foreign secret accounts or invested in the shares or capital of some companies under the names of certain figures acting as a front.

During that period and at the height of the conflict between moderates and hard-liners, Tariq 'Aziz was removed from foreign policy functions. A conflict broke out between 'Udayy and his uncle Wadban in which 'Udayy exceeded all limits and aroused the anger of the family.

Husayn Kamil became more concerned. He intimated his concern to his brother, Saddam. He even informed his wife, Raghad, the daughter of Saddam Husayn, of his fears. His brother, Saddam, also conveyed his fears to his wife, Rana, who is also the daughter of Saddam Husayn. However, the two wives told their husbands that Saddam does not sell his own flesh and blood.

The situation continued to simmer since the following incident took place in September last year: a senior military officer arrived at Husayn Kamil's house for a visit. A normal conversation took place until the commander said: The orders were issued today, and the forces have begun moving toward Kuwait. The commander was confident that Kamil knew what he was talking about.

However, Husayn Kamil was stunned. He was surprised that they did not inform him about such a serious matter, although he was one of the regime's pillars. He controlled himself and continued the conversation with his guest, as if nothing was said.

As soon his guest left, Husayn Kamil drove to a presidential rest house where he knew Saddam Husayn was spending the evening. He was welcomed by his brother, Saddam Kamil, who was in charge of the president's protection, and by Presidential Secretary 'Abd Hammud.

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He entered and greeted Saddam Husayn. He sat and waited for a chance to speak. When Saddam Husayn turned toward him, Husayn Kamil asked: Sir, what is the story about the military movements toward Kuwait?

Saddam Husayn replied: It is as you have heard.

Husayn Kamil said: Is it true, sir, that we are going to enter Kuwait and the story is going to repeat itself?

Saddam replied: The forces have moved, and everything will take place in its own time.

The answer did not satisfy Husayn Kamil. He said, complaining: Sir, I only learned about the decision by coincidence. I am a former defense minister. I supported you and still support you.

Saddam Husayn did not comment. He just turned his face briefly in another direction, and then look back at Husayn Kamil, whose face was red from embarrassment. Nevertheless, he persisted in his questions. Sir, there must be a reason for this action? He asked.

Saddam interrupted him in a loud voice, as if he wanted everyone else to hear. Of course, there are reasons for this action, he said. First, it is appropriate to carry out an action from time to time to let the world understand that we are not keeping quiet, that the issue is not easy, and that the blockade will not prevent us from acting. Second, there is the story of the lamb and the wolf. You all know it. When the Kuwaitis shout: help us, the Americans will come to help them once or twice. By the third time, they will not believe them. The third reason is the Iraqis. The people are demanding and calling on us not to keep quiet and take revenge. The movement of forces is a popular demand.

Husayn Kamil mastered all his eloquence and known ability for dialogue and said: Sir, when the attack took place against us and we withdrew from Kuwait, a mutiny took place in the north and south, and the country almost split into 60 states. Every village was turning into a state. Al-Kut, al-'Amarah, Dahuk, and Irbil almost became independent states. Anarchy reached 10 km from Baghdad. We went and spoke to the people and calmed them down. We put on trial all those who deserved it. We tried very hard to restore stability. The people cannot find food or clothing.

'Abd Hammud intervened, saying: The president leader understands the equation more than we do. He understands the calculations and knows that this action is designed to save the Iraqi people and to overcome the forces that want to compel Iraq to submit to their will and interests. The Iraqi people have endured a great deal and are prepared to endure even more for the sake of their country. They will not accept submission. The Iraqi woman is ready to breast-feed rather than let her country surrender.

Husayn Kamil said: What you are saying is nice, but it will not provide bread. Of course, the leader understands better than us and is aware of all the circumstances and calculations. Still, we are under a blockade. It is true that our army is still strong and its weapons are intact. What are we doing? Is this action important?

The discussion heated up but produced no result. 'Abd Hammud was clearly trying to fault Husayn Kamil, but the latter were shrewder. He said good night and returned to his house, where he stayed for a time to consider his next step.

Iraqi concentrations on the Kuwaiti border last year prompted the United States to redeploy its forces in the Gulf and led to security concerns in the region. It was said then that Saddam wanted to again test the seriousness of the international coalition. Observers feared that the movement of Iraqi forces within Iraqi territory, close to the Kuwaiti border, could exhaust the international forces by continuously causing them to repeat their deployment without any realistic justification. One cannot depend on intentions. If Iraqi concentrations were not faced with similar international concentrations, Iraq might launch a new adventure.

Before this conversation and after it, Saddam Husayn felt uneasy about Husayn Kamil's inclination to engage in discussions and dialogues, because he held independent views.

Knowledgeable people say that Saddam Husayn's uneasiness about his son-in-law, who was once his pampered child, was due to more serious reasons. He received information that his son-in-law has made friends for himself in the army and the centers of power, he had several outside contacts, and could form a gap in his regime.

'Abd Hammud and his clique began to plant suspicion in Saddam Husayn's mind about his son-in-law, Husayn Kamil, and this is what led him to defect. This is although 'Abd Hammud himself was not completely satisfied with Saddam Husayn's management of the crisis and tried several times to stay at home. However, Saddam Husayn and his wife, Sajidah, pacified him each time.

Arab Police Bureau Requests Arrest of Husayn Kamil

NC0912142495 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1310 GMT 9 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Tunis, 9 Dec (MENA)—The Tunisian AL-SHURUQ newspaper said today that the

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Arab Criminal Police Bureau, affiliated with the General Secretariat of the Arab Interior Ministers Council, has issued a circular to all Arab police and security services to arrest Iraqi [former] Minister Husayn Kamil on charges of embezzling public funds from Iraq.

The paper cited a source at the Iraqi Interior Ministry as saying that contacts are being held with the General Secretariat of Interpol to issue the red international publication about Husayn Kamil and distribute it to the entire world.

The paper says that the search memorandum issued by the Arab Criminal Police Bureau gives a description of the abovementioned.

The description says he holds diplomatic passport No. 18066/132 issued in Baghdad on 4 February 1994. He has a scar on his face from surgery he underwent in 1994 and is now residing in Jordan.

'Source' Denies Report on Smuggling Operation

JN0812171795 Baghdad Iraq Television Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 8 Dec 95

[Announcer-read report; from the "Evening Newspaper" program]

[FBIS Translated Text] VOA [Voice of America] and the BBC yesterday and today carried a report that Jordanian customs authorities last month confiscated materials which can be used to manufacture missiles on the pretext that they were bound for Iraq.

VOA said that U.S. Central Intelligence leaked information about these materials to Jordanian customs authorities who confiscated them.

The IRAQI NEWS AGENCY sought the truth from the National Supervision Department [NSD] at the Military Industrialization Organization. The NSD is entrusted with following up the implementation of Resolution 715. An official source in the NSD said: We are used to hearing exciting news about Iraq whenever understanding between the concerned Iraqi circles and the UN Special Commission, led by Rolf Ekeus, reaches a high level, and whenever serious progress is achieved in the work between both sides toward implementing Paragraph 22 of Resolution 687 which concerns lifting the embargo on exporting Iraqi oil.

The source added: Publishing and airing these reports are often planned prior to the Security Council's review or debate on Iraq or prior to a visit to new York by an Iraqi political delegation.

He continued: With regard to the VOA and BBC report, we would like to note that no contract has been signed by any Iraqi party to supply such materials or to order any sample of them or even request offers from any specialized company or party to supply Iraq with any of these materials.

The source said: After conducting further investigations of this information, it has become clear that in the middle of this year a Jordanian broker submitted an offer to an Iraqi industrial installation to supply it with materials for a missile control and guidance system. The broker claimed that the materials are designed for permissible ranges; namely, ranges less than 150 km. The Iraqi industrial installation, however, absolutely turned down this offer out of its commitment to the UN resolutions which ban the importation of dual-usage materials even if they are intended for the production of permissible missiles unless there is prior knowledge by the UN Special Commission.

He added: In October, and while this broker was in Baghdad, he said that these materials were in Amman and that he wished to send them to Iraq immediately even without receiving any payment for them. The Iraqi industrial installation, however, decided to not receive such materials for the same reasons mentioned earlier.

The official source at the NSD said: We are astonished by the announcement, at this particular time, that these materials were confiscated, and at the fact that such an announcement was not made when they arrived in Amman several months ago. This confirms that the whole story is intended to disrupt Iraq, especially since a delegation led by Deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz will leave for New York soon to discuss with the Security Council member states the important achievements Iraq has realized and to explain some issues that surfaced after August 1995.

The source added: By the way, we would like to point out that last year the same broker brought samples for the missile control and guidance system on his own initiative and without being asked to do so by concerned Iraqi circles. Once it learned about this issue, the NSD, in an official message dated 3 May 1994, informed him that it refuses to deal with him and warned him against repeating these attempts. A copy of this message was given to the UN Special Commission.

The source continued: We also point out that the contacts between the concerned Iraqi circles and this broker are known and officially documented by the UN Special Commission.

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Says CIA Said Behind Operation

JN0912094395 Baghdad INA in Arabic
0815 GMT 9 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 9 Dec (INA)—An Iraqi paper has accused the U.S. intelligence services of planning and fabricating the so-called operation by the Jordanian customs authorities last month to confiscate materials, which can be used in the manufacture of missiles, under the pretext that they were destined for Iraq.

In an article today, AL-JUMHURIYAH says: Every observer will not fail to notice the Central Intelligence Agency's [CIA] fingerprint and distinct trademark in such a fabricated operation.

The paper adds: In terms of the method, technique, and timing, this operation is an almost carbon copy of other fabricated operations revealed in the past five years. Like this one, these operations were combined with enormous media clamor aimed to achieve clear objectives; that is, to direct false accusations against Iraq by casting doubts on its commitment to the UN Security Council resolutions and to start a deceptive feverish campaign to block the road for any objective dialogue that will allow the United Nations and Iraq to implement their reciprocal commitments.

The paper stresses that Iraq had seriously and sincerely committed itself to implement Resolution 715. It also completed all its obligations as stipulated by the said resolution under the supervision of the specialized UN organizations.

AL-JUMHURIYAH wonders: Is it possible or logical for the party that has done all that out of its keenness and sincere desire to provide everything to help ensure a successful mission by the UN committees to resort to such methods?

The paper notes that the UN Security Council and the Special Commission, chaired by Rolf Ekeus, closed several files, including that of the long-range weapons.

The paper concludes its article by questioning the real motives behind this fabricated media clamor on the alleged smuggling operation. It says: Chief among these questions concerns the party that allowed this material to enter Jordan and remain for a long time at Amman international airport without stirring any clamor over it. This is especially since everybody knows that the Jordanian authorities do not hesitate to prevent the entry of any banned material and that they are publicly committed to the UN Security Council resolutions. Also, which party deliberately seeks to bypass the Jordanian supervision, and why has it taken so long to announce the existence of such material at Amman airport?

AL-THAWRAH Says GCC Statement 'Astonishing'

JN0812125195 Baghdad INA in Arabic
0850 GMT 8 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 8 Dec (INA) — The Iraqi newspaper AL-THAWRAH has expressed its astonishment and amazement at the final statement of the Muscat summit of the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC]. The statement is full of strange contradictions that conflict with the simplest pan-Arab principles advocated by Arab countries, the paper says.

In an editorial today by editor in chief Taha al-Basri, the newspaper says: At a time when a sense of optimism was prevailing and when Arabs and others were appealing for an end to the unjustified blockade and a relaxation was expected in inter-Arab relations, the GCC summit in Muscat surprised us with an astonishing and amazing final statement. This statement contained strange contradictions regarding inter-Arab ties.

The newspaper notes that the statement was issued following many recent calls and appeals by some Gulf states stressing the need to heal the rift and end the suffering of the Iraqi people. The statement, however, is a frank call for maintaining the sanctions against Iraq.

AL-THAWRAH adds that the GCC statement contains a flagrant contradiction when it calls, in part, for sympathizing with the Iraqi people, ignoring the fact that the Iraqi people's suffering is the result of the blockade which the United States and some of its allies insist on maintaining despite the fact that Iraq has fulfilled its obligations toward Security Council resolutions.

The newspaper goes on: The statement also flagrantly contradicts the declared policies that call for noninterference in Iraq's domestic affairs. This is because it calls for maintaining pressure on Iraq and forcing it to comply with measures and resolutions that infringe on its sovereignty, interfere in its domestic affairs, harm the dignity of its people, and prejudice its territorial integrity.

AL-THAWRAH says it is strange that the Muscat statement should voice concern over Iraq's weapons programs and express no concern at all over the weapons of mass destruction possessed by the Zionist entity or over this entity's refusal to sign the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

AL-THAWRAH goes on to say: Everyone knows that the Iraqi weapons provided for in Resolution 687 were completely destroyed under the direct supervision of the Special Commission chaired by Ambassador Ekeus, who reassured the Gulf states in his latest visit last

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month when he told them that Iraq no longer has any weapons that threaten the security of the region. Nevertheless, the statement expresses its worry at Iraqi armament programs and completely ignores Paragraph 14 of Resolution 687, which says that dismantling Iraq's weapons is part of establishing a nuclear-free zone in the Middle East.

The newspaper asks: Given this alleged Gulf worry, who should they be worried about? Is it Iraq, which defended the region and whose weapons were destroyed following the criminal 30-nation aggression under the supervision of Ekeus and his commission, or the Zionist entity, which possesses thousands of nuclear warheads and is still building its nuclear and other programs with full support from the United States and its Western allies?

The newspaper reiterates Iraq's position and honest desire and readiness to turn the page of the past.

The paper concludes its article by saying: The fact that Muscat summit statement contained many contradictions makes us believe that there is a Gulf Likud that seeks to keep Iraq isolated just as the enemies seek to further weaken and divide the Arab nation so that the usurpation of its wealth and resources will continue.

Reportage on Bombing in Shaqlawah Continues

Opposition: Bomb Came From Baghdad

LD0912130795 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1038 GMT 9 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] London, 9 Dec (SPA) — An assembly of Iraqi opposition groups said yesterday that the explosion which occurred at a UN gas station in northern Iraq the day before yesterday [7 December] which killed 20 people including two UN guards, was caused by a remote controlled bomb placed in an oil tanker that came from Baghdad.

In a statement released yesterday, the opposition [Unified] Iraqi National Congress condemned the incident, describing it as a cowardly act and as the latest in a series of terrorist assaults which have taken place recently in northern Iraq. [passage omitted]

Casualties Updated

TA0912131495 London MED TV Television in Turkish 1730 GMT 8 Dec 95

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] Twenty people have been killed in an explosion at a UN gas station in south Kurdistan's Shaqlawah city center. Two of those killed in the explosion are UN guards from the Philippines and Poland. It was learned that the explosion, in which close to 30 people were wounded, occurred in a truck waiting to fill up with gas. Two nearby buildings were damaged by the explosion which also destroyed six vehicles.

The Iraqi National Congress [INC] issued a statement following the explosion and noted that the reason for the explosion is not fully understood.

The Shaqlawah district, which is 55 km from Irbil, is under the control of the KDP [Kurdish Democratic Party]. There have been various explosions in southern Kurdistan since the beginning of February this year. More than 70 civilians lost their lives in an explosion in a market in Zakho. A month ago, 25 people were killed when an INC police station was bombed in Salah-al-Din.

Barzani's Party Issues Statement

JN0812193195 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Kurdistan in Arabic 1800 GMT 8 Dec 95

["Press statement" issued by a KDP spokesman; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] At 0920 on 7 December, an explosion occurred in the city of Shaqlawah, killing two UN guards and wounding another. Thirteen civilians also were killed and approximately 25 citizens were wounded in the explosion. The two UN guards who were killed were a Pole and a Filipino.

The security authorities in the city surrounded the explosion site and closed the main road for two hours. The initial investigation conducted by the Kurdistan Democratic Party [KDP] revealed that a highly-explosive bomb was placed near a fuel tanker on the Shaqlawah-Hajj 'Umran highway at the entrance of the city and that the bomb was detonated by remote control. The investigation also revealed that the bomb exploded when three UN cars were passing the site.

The KDP condemns the ugly terrorist attack on UN employees and defenseless civilians. The KDP also believes that the operation mainly aims at threatening security and stability in Iraq's Kurdistan to deprive the besieged Kurdish people of international protection. All necessary measures will be taken to reveal the criminals and to bring them to justice. The KDP leadership will invite UN officials to participate in the investigation to be acquainted with the circumstances of the incident and to define the identity of the party responsible for the operation.

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Ministry To Issue 'Electronic' Ration Cards for 1996

JN0712203195 Baghdad AL-'IRAQ in Arabic 28 Nov 95 p 2

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad — Effective 1 December 1995, the Ministry of Trade will begin issuing the 1996 ration cards to the citizens in Baghdad and the governorates. Making this announcement, Under Secretary Hatim al-Samarra'i said that citizens should report at the supply centers in their areas to receive their ration cards after producing the civil status identity card of the head of the family only and the 1995 card which is to be replaced.

Regarding the new guidelines on the 1996 ration card, Salah al- Din Mahdi, director of supply at the ministry, said that the new ration card is an electronic one, containing all data, and that it is essential for citizens to report any new changes in their families so that the card can be updated according to the new system. Mahdi added: Citizens can use the whole of December to report any changes so that the ministry can enter them into the card, because after December strict measures will be taken against any defaulters and those who receive additional rations illegally.

Mahdi emphasized the importance of reporting cases of death, travel abroad, and unemployment on time.

Food Rations Detailed

JN0712203395 Baghdad AL-'IRAQ in Arabic 29 Nov 95 p 2

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad — The Ministry of Trade called on the agents of foodstuffs and flour in Baghdad and the governorates to report at the supply centers to receive the citizens' rations of food supplies for the month of December 1995 as of Friday, 1 December, according to the increase which was ordered by leader President Saddam Husayn by adding one kilogram of flour and 125 grams of vegetable oil to every citizen's ration.

A ministry source explained that every individual's ration will consist of 7 kilograms — 6 kilograms of local flour and 1 kilogram of zero flour — at the price of 805 fils, 1.25 kilograms of rice at the price of 375 fils, 100 grams of tea at the price of 200 fils, 500 grams of sugar at the price of 100 fils, 750 grams of ghee at the price of 480 fils, 250 grams of washing powder at the price of 200 fils, and 150 grams of soap at the price of 135 fils.

The source pointed out that the ration of every child who is below one year is four 450-gram tins of milk at the price of 3 dinars, 250 grams of washing powder at the price of 200 fils, and 150 grams of soap at the price of 135 fils. The source also pointed out that the total price of the ration is 5.63 dinars.

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Peres on Cabinet Politics, Talks With Clinton

TA0812152995 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT [LESHABAT supplement] in Hebrew 8 Dec 95 pp 2, 3

[Report on interview with Prime Minister Shim'on Peres by Shim'on Schiffer and Nahum Barne'a in Peres' office on 5 December]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Shim'on Peres came back from the memorial service held this week to mark the 30th day since Yitzhaq Rabin's assassination and decided to turn a new page. Rabin is what used to be; from now on begins the Peres era. "I will not downplay the major and decisive role he played now that he is dead," Peres told us this week, "but we were not created in the same mold. We are different, and the reality is different."

In the Prime Minister's Bureau, the picture of Yig'al Alon has been replaced with one of Ben-Gurion and Peres. The shelves are now filled to the brim with books. Long-time associates go in and out of his office: Moshe Te'omim, Giyora 'Eyni, Lillian Shalom, Avraham Burg, and others. Peres is a man who has many close confidants.

Peres says he will not have a "kitchen cabinet." In fact, he intends to rule alone, the way Rabin could never afford to do. He does not see the members of his cabinet as partners, but as proteges and neophytes who need to learn the ropes. Even Avraham Shohat and David Liba'i, who joined the political team this week, are seen by Peres as youngsters with a chance to grow up. "In time a team will form that will work together. They will learn the work," he says.

Hayim Ramon gathered from the talks preceding the establishment of the government that Peres would put him in charge of internal politics. He was wrong. In fact, Peres entrusted the job to Yosi Beilin, thus driving a wedge in the Ramon camp. Peres described to us the division of work. One had better pay attention to the way he expressed himself.

"Yosi is a grown-up. He takes a lot of initiatives. He enjoys my full support. Everybody gets support in his field. I fully involve Ehud (Baraq) in foreign affairs. As for Ramon, I will help him in his field, to be a successful interior minister."

That is malicious, we said.

"Why malicious?" asked Peres, grinning broadly.

One cabinet minister said earlier this week that Peres will have to choose the political rules of the game he wants to work with. He can either set policy in an orderly and matter-of-fact manner or foster a bunch of indefatigable saboteurs, youthful clones of the old Peres who will constantly contrive political and personal schemes, leak information, and kick each other under the table. "The indefatigable saboteurs are back," the minister said bitterly.

"Indefatigable saboteur" is the epithet Rabin once gave Peres.

Until Peres makes up his mind (he never will), the ministers will try very hard to please him. Ehud Baraq, who displayed a great deal of political independence vis-a-vis Rabin when he was chief of staff, is now keeping his views to himself. In the talks with Ross he sounded more like Peres than Peres himself. Better not to mention all the others.

Rabin dwarfed the status of cabinet ministers, while Peres is also trying to deprive them of their right to speak. As of this week, for the first time in history, a stopwatch similar to those used in chess matches will be used in cabinet sessions. He forbade ministers to speak to journalists waiting in front of the building when they emerge from cabinet sessions.

In the memorial service for Rabin held by Jerusalem Municipality on Monday Peres swore allegiance to the unity of Jerusalem. "At the center of Rabin's and my strategic resolution to go for the Oslo agreements was the decision: Do not touch Jerusalem," he said. "Jerusalem is not an issue for compromise, division, or partnership between two states. Jerusalem is the essence of our commitment to the future."

We asked Peres whether he had embraced Rabin's position which aspired to annex Greater Jerusalem, from the 'Etzyon Bloc to Giv'at Ze'ev.

"I did not say Greater Jerusalem," Peres replied. "I meant Jerusalem within its current municipal boundaries. The principle guiding me with regard to the permanent arrangement in the West Bank is that there will not be a foreign army between the Jordan River and the sea. I do not accept there being no room for Jewish settlements. At the same time, I will not support the expansion of settlements."

"I know almost every government in the world, but I do not know one whose sessions last six to seven hours and then everything spills out," Peres says. "Are they angels? Seeing that the most valuable possession I and the ministers have is time, it should be respected. Not to mention the disgrace of everybody walking up to the press."

It looks like an autocracy, we told him.

"It is neither a trick nor an autocracy," he replied.

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We reminded him that in his previous tenure as prime minister there was a three-men forum — Rabin, Shamir, and him — that made the decisions. Which forum will make the decisions in the current government?

"We were three very disciplined men. Nothing ever leaked out of our deliberations," he answered.

Early Sunday morning he will fly to the United States for his coronation visit. Israeli prime ministers are sworn in by the Knesset, but crowned in the White House. Will Peres seize this festive occasion to inform Clinton that Israel is prepared to withdraw from the entire Golan Heights?

No way, Peres tells us. "I will tell Clinton: An historic opportunity has been created to put an end to the wars in the Middle East — that will be my opening statement — now let us talk about the concept.

"I am not going to the White House to sell land. It is not a grocery store. In a grocery store I buy bread, not peace. If al-Asad thinks that Israel is willing to haggle he is wrong. The people have a strong desire to free the Middle East of wars. That is what I will be taking with me to Washington. Like the Americans say, a farewell to arms."

On the face of it, these blunt words point to a genuine indifference on the part of Peres to invest efforts in an agreement with Syria. He has enough peace without al-Asad, especially when his rival for the premiership is Binyamin Netanyahu.

Israelis involved in the process nevertheless believe that a tacit agreement will be reached with Clinton to drag out the Syrian issue until the elections. Both Peres and Clinton will be facing elections the same week. Accelerated negotiations with Syria will not benefit them in the elections. Of course, Christopher thinks differently: An agreement with Syria is the only personal asset he would be able to take with him into retirement.

To please his audience, Peres will underscore to Clinton the big and global peace package: The deal must include both Saudi Arabia and North Africa, the entire Muslim world. Al-Asad will not be amused by this talk.

Having said that, Peres' biography shows that he prefers to keep all options open. He will try a variety of indirect ways to reach the Syrians. He tried one such contact in recent years, through the daughter of Syrian Defense Minister Mustafa Talas who lives in Paris. There are tactics and there is instinct. Tactics say quit begging for meetings with al-Asad and al-Shar', but instinct wants a meeting.

Peres read the Syria file when he moved to the Prime Minister's Bureau and contempt soon followed. He does not believe in pursuing the diplomatic effort made in recent years through the shuttle trips of Christopher and Ross and the ambassadors' talks in Washington. Peres wants a Washington-bypass route.

"I have never believed in recycling used tools. The art of negotiation is to dig up possibilities that were not visible before. If you want to breathe life into the process you must constantly look for new formulas. What there was before resembles a dead duck."

Are you striving for a new Oslo that will lead you to Damascus? we asked.

"It was the same with Jordan," he replied.

Peres intends to tell Clinton what the Syrians, and the Arabs in general, should propose to him, what we really care about.

"Ending the state of war in the Middle East; settling the questions of borders, water, and security arrangements; an economic ingredient in the relations."

Al-Asad says that he first needs a commitment to effect a full withdrawal, we said.

"So al-Asad says," Peres retorts, "I did not promise to accept what al-Asad says. There are no dictates." The U.S. team that visited Israel this week is aware of the disdain felt toward it in Peres' close circle. Dennis Ross heard Peres' pronouncements on the Syrian issue and refused to be impressed. Somebody heard him say that "Peres is a walking recitation."

What he actually proposes, without specifically committing himself, is a structure under which the Palestinians would have full autonomy in Gaza and an ambiguous autonomy in the West Bank, perhaps a condominium [as published] between Israel, the Palestinians, and Jordan. "There are many possibilities on the issue of sovereignty," he says. "Who says that the solution must be a conventional one? One can also live without sovereignty. So what? The West Bank has been living without sovereignty for 50 years."

Peres resolutely rejects the idea of separation between Israel and the Palestinians which so appealed to Rabin. "I am surprised about many people. Well, let them take a pair of scissors and cut the West Bank into two parts, each one being surrounded by barbed wire, mine fields, and passages. No, we must find a new solution."

Peres does not plan to conduct significant negotiations with 'Arafat until the Israeli elections. The talks on the permanent arrangement will open in May, but they will deal with marginal issues in the first months. "No

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political party ever enters significant negotiations a few months before elections," says Peres. The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] is scheduled to effect an additional withdrawal on the eve of the elections. Implementation will most probably be postponed or limited to a very small area. Peres knows that 'Arafat will not press him. 'Arafat does not want to see the Likud rise back to power.

Peres went to Amman two days ago and explained to King Husayn what will happen in the West Bank in the coming year. "I told Husayn that there is an orderly and neat timetable until the end of October 1996. We will do what we have to do. He was pleased."

Peres is behind Yosi Beilin's efforts to get closer to the National Religious Party [NRP]. Their purpose is to isolate the Likud in the extreme right and encourage religious Israelis to vote for Peres in the personal elections. "Relations between secular and religious Zionism are important. There have been and there will always be religious people. There is no need to upset them or to foster discord just for the fun of it. The tone sets the music.

"We have no political agreement with the NRP. We have an understanding that it will accept what already exists, both with regard to Oslo B and the negotiations with Syria, until the elections .

"It is good that a people has two or three views. It is bad when there are two or three peoples. Therein lies the entire difference."

His conciliation efforts do not extend to the radical groups. "There are a few hundred people here who advocate murder. This is not child's play. I must seriously deal with it. We are talking about a cancerous growth."

Sunday morning he will land in New York and immediately proceed to attend a rally at Madison Square Garden. Le'a Rabin will be at his side. Immediately after the assassination U.S. Jewish activists were fighting to take part in the events commemorating Rabin. A month has gone by since then and the enthusiasm has died down. Colette Avital, the Israeli consul in New York, reported this week that she is working very hard to fill the seats. Among other things, she asked the consul in Philadelphia to persuade Jews in his district to attend.

Peres' work day is as crowded as that of his predecessor. After one month in office he exudes exhaustion. Surprisingly enough, he also admits as much.

"The first month was very hard on me," he said in response to our question, "both mentally and physically. I took the event very hard. Then there is also the burden, which was split between two people who were not exactly lazy bums. It is not simple.

"That period is now behind me. I hope to go back to a regimen of orderly work."

Peres is confident that his attitude to the job will be different this time. "Contrary to what people say about me, when I get up in the morning I do not think what people will say but what needs to be done.

"To be absolutely sincere, last time I was dying to be prime minister. I cannot say the same this time. I did not snatch the job, but it snatched me. Therefore, I feel a deep sense of responsibility. I am not trying to make an impression. I will exercise my best judgment, experience, and fairness; not in order to succeed, but to do the job." [passage omitted]

Peres' Agenda for Clinton Meeting Previewed

To Discuss Golan Pullout

NC0812154995 Paris AFP in English 1449 GMT 8 Dec 95

[Report by Jo Strich]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Jerusalem, Dec 8 (AFP) — Prime Minister Shim'on Peres is to discuss the possibility of a complete Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights when he meets US President Bill Clinton on Mo. lay [11 December] in Washington, officials said.

Peres also wants to speed up the pace of negotiations with Syria to finalize an accord, at least in principle, before Israel's elections on October 29, 1996, advisors to the prime minister said Friday.

"My primary goal is to discuss ways to overcome obstacles with Syria," Peres himself told reporters the previous day.

The prime minister intends to present Clinton with three proposals for reaching peace with Syria that are more ambitious than those of his slain predecessor, Yitzhaq Rabin, the officials said. Peres will say that the Jewish state could be willing to announce its intention to completely withdraw from the Golan plateau, which it has so far refused to do.

Whether the declaration would be public or delivered in private to Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad has yet to be determined.

"This declaration will be at the center of the meetings in Washington," Yosi Beilin, the minister in charge of the peace process, said Friday.

Rabin, who was gunned down by a Jewish fanatic opposed to the peace process on November 4, had

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refused to commit to a complete withdrawal from the Golan, which Israel seized from Syria in the 1967 Middle East war. The former prime minister said the "size of the withdrawal depends on the size of the peace."

Syria has demanded a complete withdrawal from the Golan Heights in exchange for peace and has refused Israeli demands for early- warning stations on the strategic plateau. Peace talks which began between the two countries in 1991 ground to a halt in June on the security issues.

Peres will also ask the United States to play a more active role such as appointing a permanent representative in the region to oversee Middle East peace negotiations, instead of sending envoys periodically.

The third proposal, also a departure from Rabin's position, is that a wide range of negotiations be held simultaneously, including normalization of ties, a Golan withdrawal, and a timetable for implementing security arrangements.

US Secretary of State Warren Christopher would submit the proposals to al-Asad in a shuttle between Syria and Israel at the end of next week.

To sell a deal with Syria to the Israeli public, the prime minister is stressing that peace with Damascus would open the gates to the rest of the Arab world.

"I do not doubt that the next phase will have a regional character and not only bilateral," he said Thursday.

Peres is also seeking to boost Israel's strategic relationship with the United States at a time when a longstanding debate over a defence pact has been revived.

In New York on Sunday before heading for Washington, he will try to improve the government's relations with American Jews, many of whom are opponents of the peace process and had came under strong criticism from Rabin.

Peres and Rabin's widow, Le'ah, are to attend a New York rally in memory of the assassinated premier.

To Present Detailed Syria Proposals

TA0812190895 Jerusalem Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 8 Dec 95

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] Jerusalem has received reports from well-informed sources saying Damascus is anxiously awaiting the results of the meeting of Prime Minister Peres with U.S. President Clinton next Monday [11 December]. Our political correspondent 'Imanu'el Rosen reports that Peres will submit a detailed proposal to Clinton for resuming the negotiations with Syria. The following are the components of this proposal:

— Peres will propose immediately starting discussions on Israel's withdrawal from the Golan Heights and south Lebanon simultaneously with all the other issues.

— Israel is willing to pay the full price for full peace, which will include full normalization and include all Arab countries except for Sudan, Iraq, and Libya.

— Peres will ask the Americans to increase their involvement and will explain to Clinton that he expects a tripartite summit with al-Asad in the near future. Peres will propose holding the talks secretly, acknowledging only the fact they are being held.

President Clinton will talk with President al-Asad by telephone immediately after he meets Prime Minister Peres. U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher will come to the region as early as next Thursday [14 December] in a bid to coordinate the opening of the negotiations.

[Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew at 1800 GMT on 8 December adds: "Syria is considering sending out a positive signal toward Israel next week, during Prime Minister Shim'on Peres' visit to Washington. Our correspondent Ehud Ya'ari reports from London that Syrian sources have said the possibility of such a signal has been considered over the last few days in the wake of U.S. envoy Dennis Ross' visit. The Syrian sources said, however, that President al-Asad's timetable will not change just because Peres is interested in a quicker pace of negotiations."]

To Seek Clinton Shuttle Mission

TA0912193995 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 9 Dec 95

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Shim'on Peres will depart tonight on his first visit to the United States since assuming office as prime minister. Political sources in Jerusalem told our correspondent Dan Scemama that they attribute great importance to the visit, especially as far as the negotiations with Syria are concerned. The sources told our correspondent that the prime minister wants to hear from President Clinton whether he will agree to get personally involved in facilitating the negotiations to the extent of announcing a shuttle trip to the region after U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher prepares the ground for this. Our correspondent in Washington Ya'aqov Ahime'ir says the U.S. Administration expects Prime Minister Peres to bring with him new ideas for advancing the talks with Syria.

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Peres will attend a memorial service for the late Yitzhaq Rabin in New York tomorrow. On 11 December, he will meet with President Clinton in Washington for a tete-a-tete and will also hold a meeting with General Colin Powell and members of Congress. Our correspondent in Washington notes that the prime minister has also been invited to address a joint session of the two houses of Congress. In his speech, Peres will emphasize the great importance of the United States' involvement in maintaining world peace.

[Jerusalem Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew at 1800 GMT on 9 December carries a similar report by political correspondent 'Imanu'el Rosen, adding: "On his way back to Israel, Peres will hold a brief visit with Morocco's King Hassan. We have learned that Hassan is seriously ill, and Peres' visit is mainly aimed at paying tribute to him in these difficult days."]

Not To Encourage Defense Pact Idea

TA1012081395 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 10 Dec 95 p 7

[Report by political correspondent Shim'on Schiffer]

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Shim'on Peres arrives in New York today at the start of his three-day lightning visit to the United States during which he will meet President Clinton at the White House on Monday [11 December], confer with U.S. Administration officials, and address a joint session of Congress.

Mr. Peres is due to leave New York tonight for Washington where he will stay at Blair House, the U.S. Administration's residence for official guests.

Peres is due to present to President Clinton at noon Monday his concept of the arrangement with Syria. Sources very close to Peres noted that the prime minister plans to stress Israel's demand to hear from the Syrians the substance of peace with Israel. Peres does not plan to inform President Clinton of Israel's readiness to withdraw to the 1967 boundaries within the framework of a settlement with Syria. Peres will also not present such a position paper to the U.S. President.

On Tuesday night, Peres leaves Washington for a visit of several hours to Morocco.

Prior to his departure, Peres said that he is not going to the United States "to ask for money. That is not the problem. I am going to America to work out the agenda for the coming years in the deepest possible political sense."

Peres also does not plan to encourage the idea of a defense pact with the United States. The subject was raised by members of the Israeli lobby, AIPAC [America Israel Public Affairs Committee], who encouraged one of the presidential candidates, Republican majority leader Bob Dole, to raise the issue.

In deliberations preceding Peres' trip, most of the speakers rejected the idea and claimed that Israel and the United States are already tied through agreements that grant to Israel preferential terms in the security field, without the limitations that a defense pact could impose on it.

To Ask CIA To Restrict Satellite Sales

TA1012100995 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 10 Dec 95 p A1

[Report by Aluf Ben]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Israel will ask the United States to restrict the sale of spy satellites to Arab states so that they will not be able to take photographs of Israeli territory and thus eliminate the IDF's [Israel Defense Forces] qualitative edge in the Middle East. Israel will also ask that the sale of satellite pictures to these countries be restricted. This issue will feature in the meeting Prime Minister Shim'on Peres will hold with CIA Director John Deutch tomorrow.

Over the past several months, Israeli officials have been conducting negotiations with the U.S. Administration in an attempt to reduce the technological capability of the spy satellites the United States is about to sell to Saudi Arabia and possibly to the United Arab Emirates. It has been published that the administration agreed to restrict the transfer of technology so that the Saudis would not be able to control the satellite movement from the ground or improve the quality of the obtained images with computer processing. In return, Israel promised to impose similar restrictions on its exports of Ofeq satellites.

The company that manufactures the satellites, which initiated the deal with Saudi Arabia, indeed pledged not to photograph Israeli territory, but it has been decided in Israel not to settle for this and to demand that the administration provide clearer guarantees by the highest echelons. [passage omitted]

To Seek Approval for Sale of Weapons

TA0912132095 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1200 GMT 9 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] During his visit to the United States, Prime Minister Shim'on Peres will discuss the possibility of granting the Israeli military industries a permit to export weapons and military equipment that contain U.S. components. Among other things to be discussed is the sale of Kfir jet fighters to

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Ecuador and Sri Lanka. This is reported by our political correspondent Shlomo Raz. Mr. Peres will raise the issue during his meeting with Secretary of Defense William Perry at the Pentagon. The United States restricts the exports of Israeli defense products that contain U.S. components.

Paper: Peres To Urge Clinton To Back Off on Syria

TA1012133795 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 10 Dec 95 p 2

[Editorial by Sever Plotzker: "No Surprises Expected"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Shim'on Peres left for the United States last night to continue his round of meetings in his new capacity as prime minister. Peres visited Brussels, the European capital. He then met with the heads of the neighboring Arab countries and the head of the Palestinian Authority. He will now spend the coming week in the United States and meet with Clinton.

Peres' political agenda up to the elections contains no surprises. Surprises are risky, and when a prime minister enjoys a sudden surge of popularity like the one Peres is enjoying today, he has no interest in taking unnecessary risks.

Peres will ask the administration to find a way to get around its conflicts with Congress and allow the transfer of the full extent of U.S. aid to Israel, even at a time when the White House and the legislators cannot reach a compromise on the budget. Peres may even employ his personal lobby in Washington to promote the interests of Israel Aircraft Industries and the military industries and will try to expedite the big projects of the new Middle East.

Only on the Syrian issue will Peres make an unusual request. He will ask the State Department to reduce the extent of its involvement in mediating between Israel and Syria and perhaps even stop it altogether. It is my impression, Peres will tell Clinton, that the visits to Damascus by Christopher and Ross hardly yield results, and it may be that they do more harm than good. The intensive U.S. involvement is leading the Syrians to the mistaken conclusion that there is no need for a direct dialogue with the Israelis. Israel reached arrangements with the Palestinians and the Jordanians without U.S. mediation. If the Syrians do not want to talk to us, Peres will tell Clinton, fine. Let us wait and see. The negotiations are totally frozen anyway.

As foreign minister, Peres often expressed, directly or indirectly, his view of the final destination of the Israeli-Syrian talks: full peace (and not only with Damascus but with the entire sane Arab world) in return for a full Israeli withdrawal from the Golan. Therefore, the Syrians have no reason to doubt Peres' integrity. They cannot claim that the proposals he has been making are a mere trick to avoid reaching an agreement.

In the absence of U.S. mediation, al-Asad will have to choose between talking to Israel, openly or secretly, or wallowing in inertia.

Defense Pact With U.S. Seen as Timely Idea

TA0812133195 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 8 Dec 95 p 5

[Commentary by Mark A. Heller, senior research associate at Tel Aviv University's Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies: "An Idea Whose Time Has Come"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Every flutter of diplomatic activity on the Syrian track sparks another round of the debate about security arrangements on the Golan. Ordinarily, that just means going over familiar ground, but a suggestion by Robert Dole, Senate majority leader and possible Republican presidential candidate, indicates that more consideration will now be given to the old idea of a U.S.-Israel defense treaty. It is an idea whose time has come.

The fundamental purpose of security arrangements should be to maximize the likelihood that any land-for-peace bargain is kept by the other side. Peace ultimately rests on political relationships, but the military component of the relationship with Syria will be essential for a long time to come, and it is in this context that guarantees — as a form of security arrangement — must be understood.

Security arrangements cannot compel Syria to maintain a "warm peace," but they can, by ensuring the application of superior counterforce, deter Syria from using the Golan as a platform from which to attack Israel or damage its vital interests. International guarantees should not be substitutes for superior Israeli force, but, by supplementing that force, they should ensure that it will not be tested.

A guarantee will work only if it is both adequate and reliable. This is why every serious discussion of the issue proceeds from the assumption that the U.S. will be directly involved and formally committed. Otherwise, the guarantee won't be seen as substantial and worthy of respect.

But most proposals posit the stationing of American forces on the Golan as part of some multinational peacekeeping force, an idea which fails two other critical tests of reliability: (1) that the U.S. alone be responsible for activating the guarantee in the event

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of a challenge, because any multilateral mechanism implies international consultation — an almost certain prescription for paralysis; and (2) that the nature of the contingency and the response be explicitly defined, because ambiguity would invite testing and precipitate domestic consultation in the U.S. (and disagreements between the U.S. and Israel).

The effectiveness of specific, easily recognizable contingencies cannot be overstated. Since World War II, the U.S. has been drawn into hostilities on many occasions, including in Korea and Kuwait, precisely because of vaguely defined commitments which projected uncertainty about whether and how they would be honored. The embarrassments of Lebanon and Somalia are not examples of American inconstancy, but simply demonstrations of the timeworn truth about the need for clarity. The U.S. has never fought a war in defense of formal treaty obligations, because it has never had to.

Thus what is needed is not a general U.S. guarantee of "the peace" or an amorphous commitment to "peacekeeping." That mission should be left to others — perhaps the UN — who will either enforce agreements with respect to the Golan, or at least not inhibit an Israeli response to Syrian violations.

Instead, the American guarantee should be to Israel, and its purpose should be to compensate Israel for the loss of the Golan by directly reinforcing Israeli deterrent power through a high- resolution, high-visibility obligation to act militarily in the event of a military attack on Israel.

In short, the most effective security arrangement would be a formal mutual defense treaty, enshrined in U.S. law through Senate ratification, and made manifest by the presence of U.S. forces, not on the Golan but inside Israel itself. The American force need not be large, but its permanent presence would ensure that an attack on Israel automatically engages the U.S.

Despite the power inequalities that exist and will remain in the U.S.-Israel relationship, a mutual defense treaty would not reduce Israel to the role of supplicant. A formal alliance may slightly constrain Israel's freedom to act without regard to U.S. concerns (this, in any case, is hardly absolute), but it would also enhance the strategic cooperation that already exists, encourage even more intensive ongoing consultation and joint planning, and permit access to development and procurement programs for which only allies are eligible, while preserving the role of Israeli strength in the maintenance of peace.

Most important, a mutual defense treaty would ensure that any attack on Israel immediately triggers implementation of the treaty, and that an attack would therefore fail, politically as well as militarily. In this way, a U.S.-Israel mutual defense treaty promises what peace and other security arrangements cannot: not just that Israel will win the next war, but that it won't have to fight it.

Need for Defense Pact With U.S. Questioned

TA0812133095 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 8 Dec 95 p 5

[Commentary by Dore Gold, director of the U.S. Foreign and Defense Policy Project at Tel Aviv University's Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies: "The Key Word: Caution"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] On the face of it, the idea Prime Minister Peres is considering — that Israel and the U.S. upgrade their long-standing strategic relationship into an actual alliance treaty shouldn't be controversial.

From the Korean War on, Israel and the U.S. were on the same side of the fence in the global struggle against the Soviet Union — indeed, in 1970 Israeli pilots shot down Soviet aircraft over the Suez Canal. Israel and the U.S. have years of experience at "strategic cooperation" that has included visits of Sixth Fleet warships, joint military exercises and research. This relationship began to be codified in written understandings back in 1983 between the Shamir government and the Reagan administration.

In short, Israel and the U.S. have already been allies without an alliance. But taking the relationship one stage further to a formal treaty raises several serious questions.

First, why now? Back in 1975, secretary of state Henry Kissinger and foreign minister Yig'al Alon signed a memorandum that stated: "...the United States Government will view with particular gravity threats to Israel's security or sovereignty by a world power."

When the USSR threatened the Middle East, Israel was in particular need of a defense commitment against a superpower it couldn't counter on its own. But these circumstances changed after the breakup of the Soviet Union. The main development on the horizon that might justify a change in Israel-U.S. strategic ties would be further developments in the peace process, particularly in negotiations with Syria.

This is one of the key problems with a new defense pact.

True, if the Peres government has to market a full withdrawal from the Golan Heights to a wary Israeli public, having a new Israeli-American treaty of alliance ahead of time could help. But the treaty could also affect the course of the negotiations.

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Yitzhaq Rabin wanted first to know what "security arrangements" he could obtain for a Golan withdrawal before agreement was secured in other areas. In certain respects, this followed the pattern set in 1978 by the Begin government, which hammered out most of the details of Sinai's "security arrangements" before the parties went to Camp David.

With the expected new broader format of negotiations being considered by the Peres peace team, agreement on security arrangements might be put off to a later stage. And if it became clear that these hard security issues were blocking a peace treaty, it would be tempting for negotiators to make security concessions, since Israel, in any case, has an American guarantee.

Why go through the arduous task of getting the Syrians to redeploy their army on the Turkish border, or cut their armor, if there is a U.S. commitment to come to Israel's defense?

In the past, Israel had no pretensions of being able to defend itself against the Soviet Union; thus U.S.-Israeli ties complemented the IDF's [Israel Defense Forces] independent military power. But in the context of an Israeli-Syrian peace treaty, a new strategic relationship could evolve into a substitute for Israel's self- defense capability, with enormous implications beyond the peace process itself.

With Israel negotiating hard territorial concessions, the U.S. has eased pressure in the sensitive area of nuclear arms control. But pressures in this field will resume; an effective worldwide regime for nuclear nonproliferation will remain a vital security concern of the U.S. in the post-Cold War era.

The essence of a formal Israeli-U.S. alliance is the recognition of an attack on Israel as an attack on the U.S. itself. And that being the case, it can be argued that a treaty reduces the need for an independent Israeli deterrent capability. Why not depend on the retaliatory power of U.S. submarines in the Mediterranean? The alliance could thus become a useful instrument to get Israel to sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

A formal U.S.-Israeli alliance also touches on intangibles in the U.S.-Israeli relationship. Much of Americans' secret admiration for Israel stems from the fact that Israel has taken care of itself. Unlike Vietnam and Korea, it didn't need U.S. protection. This image could easily be eroded after a formal treaty is signed and debated.

In his clash with the American Jewish community over loan guarantees for Israel in 1991, a hostile president Bush pointed to Israeli dependence on American-manned missile defense crews during the Gulf war. In Washington of 1996, the community will be asked: Why does the U.S. continue to pay for new F-15's for the Israeli Air Force, if Israel's security is protected by a treaty?

Back in 1981, Moshe Dayan declared: "I don't recommend that any one of us accept as a substitute (for Israel's positions in the territories) even entering NATO, international guarantees, or American soldiers." Alon wrote of military guarantees as an addition "to...defensible borders, and in no way as a substitute for them." Finally, Rabin warned in his memoirs: "No army is a substitute for the IDF in protecting Israel's security."

Before proposing a new Israeli-U.S. alliance, the Peres peace team should emulate the caution shown by the founding fathers of Israel's national security doctrine.

Writer Warns Against Strategic Pact With U.S.

TA0712185895 Tel Aviv DAVAR RISHON (DAVAR SHENI supplement) in Hebrew 7 Dec 95 p 2

[Commentary by Aharon Amir: "A Pact: What For?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The ink has not yet dried on the Oslo B agreement; the bottle of ink for the outline of the draft Damascus A surrender agreement has not been brought in yet; the 30 days of mourning for the Israeli prime minister (the most prominent peace sacrifice Israel has made since the convention of the Madrid conference) have not ended — and someone has already bothered to pull out and revive the dormant idea of a "strategic" pact between us and United States of America.

When asked in a television interview, the current prime minister expressed reservations about this idea. Reporters attentive to the moods of Israel's top echelons hurriedly wrote it off. Nevertheless, the air surrounding the resumption (or continuation) of the negotiations with the Syrian rulers is so foggy and thick that a regular Israeli citizen will find it hard to even guess whether anything is really happening there at all. In fact, we would not be a surprised if we heard that those dealing with the give-and-take process on our behalf do not know for certain what they are giving, not to mention what (if anything) they are taking.

In his prime days as virtuoso secretary of state for President Nixon, Henry Kissinger — who travelled and shuttled our area like some bee loaded with nectar — nicely said that not everywhere there is smoke, there is fire; sometimes, it is someone operating a smoke machine.

Yet, it seems that in the battle for peace, Israelis armed with indefatigable visions are putting out with a

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maddening insistence a smoke screen that is a necessary (albeit "conventional") weapon. It is so important that the parties can no longer tell real from artificial smoke, just that they cannot trust any comment by a wazir, general, or spokesperson.

It appears that some official of whatever level, in either Washington or Jerusalem, found that he may add "a drop of his own" to the overall mind-boggling situation: The egg of a strategic pact between the two capitals. It may be a while before we find out just who laid the egg or who is going to sit on it, certainly not if a chick hatches, even if it suffers from rickets. In any event, there is a lot of doubt that anyone will ever admit fathering it in front of the public.

Officially, of course, as the prime minister put it, there is a need "to examine it." It is desirable, however, that it be made clear from the very start to anyone involved in the examinations, that a burning ambition to make achievements on the Syrian track on time is not enough to justify showing off some promised U.S. backing as the absolute alternative to whatever is left of Israel's strategic assets.

It is hard to assume that Israeli public opinion will indeed be misled by the idea of making a "pact" with our giant patron. Quite the contrary: A total dependence on the United States while completely neutralizing Israel's forceful image might bring about a disastrous avalanche from entire sectors and regions inside Israel.

The apparent external reaction to it is no less destructive. There is no doubt that the EU, and the same goes for the Nonaligned Movement, will react with anger (fierce or subdued) to such an idea, not to mention its implementation. The members of the Arab League (which, after all, are part of any Middle East map, old or "new") will move between rage and resentment, or between panic and hysteria. The Third World countries (including India and China, for example) will find Israel, to a large extent, exchanging the status of a preferred and favored protege of the Washington royal court, for the status of humble slave.

And last but absolutely not least, in the United States itself — which still enjoys the power of the monopoly it gained after the collapse of the Soviet threat — in the power corridors and in the eyes of public opinion (including the Jews), Israel stands to lose its prestige as a regional superpower as well as its standing as a geopolitical, electoral, sentimental, and psychological asset. Eventually it will become a practical nuisance and a potential burden.

Israel had better seek — and find — alliances in the parts of the world that are its habitat, where its power, ability, position, and promises still carry some weight.

Criticism of Ross Said for Domestic Purposes

TA1112110795 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV (HAYOM supplement) in Hebrew 11 Dec 95 p 2

[Commentary by Moshe Zaq: "The Associates Against Dennis Ross"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] On the eve of his departure for the United States, Shim'on Peres tried to correct a wrong: The recent slander campaign launched by the Israeli media against Dennis Ross created the impression that Israel opposes U.S. mediation.

The slanderers, whom the media calls "associates" or "central peace process figures," claim that the freeze in the talks with Damascus is due to Ross' apathy, and that he is to blame for the failure of the talks between the Syrian and Israeli chiefs of staff. In their enthusiasm, the "associates" mentioned that the agreement with the PLO and the peace contract with Jordan were attained without American mediation. They only forgot to add that Israel needed — and still needs — American aid to pay the checks it signed during the negotiations with the PLO and Jordan.

The critics, however, do not propose pushing the United States out of its mediation position, although direct negotiations are always preferable. This is the only way to examine the real intentions of the other side concerning peace. The fact is that the negotiations with Egypt did not start at Camp David, but in the Dayan-al-Tuhami meeting in Morocco, and later continued when al-Sadat came to Jerusalem. The "associates" who attack Ross in the media, know that Peres will not forsake U.S. mediation. They only want to train Dennis Ross to dance to their tune and at their tempo.

The tempo the "associates" expect is determined by the Israeli elections agenda. Clinton, however, has his own timetable, which took him to Bosnia and Ireland first. Dennis Ross works according to a tempo set in Washington, not Jerusalem.

The "associates" want the mediator to bring proposals of his own and not settle for delivering messages from one side to the other. This implied request to be pressured could present Clinton with the dilemma of having to chose between the promise President Nixon made to al-Asad and the promise President Ford made to Rabin: During his visit to Damascus in 1994, Nixon promised al-Asad to push Israel from the Golan Heights; in a letter to Rabin, Ford pledged that the United States would take Israel's security needs into consideration when

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the permanent Israeli-Syrian border is determined. The U.S. Administration is trying to avoid having to make a choice, while the "associates" want the American mediator to decide and thus influence the Israeli public, most of which sticks to the "The People With the Golan" slogan, that makes Israeli Government decisions difficult.

Dennis Ross was chosen to be the target of criticism by the "associates," despite the fact that he is merely carrying out the President's policy. He must not panic in the face of Israeli media criticism. Similar charges were made in the past against Secretaries of State George Shultz and Warren Christopher when they refused to take steps that could pressure Israel and impose on the Israeli public opinion. [passage omitted]

This method of forcing the American mediator into taking an active stand in order to affect the Israeli public once again won the ideological backing of Prof. Ze'ev Sternhal. On more than one occasion, it has been implemented by Israelis who wanted to lean on American mediators in order to settle domestic Israeli conflicts. Dennis Ross is the most recent victim of these hidden intentions.

Rabin Reportedly Gave Clinton Promise on Golan

TA1012193795 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 10 Dec 95

[Studio talk between anchor Hayim Yavin and political correspondent Nisim Mish'al — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Yavin] Yitzhaq Rabin promised President Clinton that Israel would be prepared to withdraw to the international border with Syria while taking its own security needs into consideration, our political correspondent Nisim Mish'al has learned. Nisim, what is Peres taking to Clinton, and what promises will he have to make?

[Mish'al] Shim'on Peres does not have to bring anything material to Clinton tomorrow, because Clinton already received a promise from Yitzhaq Rabin, although we must note, in all fairness, that Rabin made this promise in accordance with a resolution passed by the Israeli national unity government in 1967 which says that Israel would be prepared to withdraw to the international line — not to the 4 June 1967 line — while taking its security needs into consideration.

[Yavin] This promise was the surprise Peres found on Rabin's desk when he took over.

[Mish'al] Peres apparently knew nothing about it. He found out about it only after he took over as prime minister. That being the case, Clinton will merely ask Peres to stick to the promise Rabin gave him, evidently in one of their private conversations.

[Yavin] How involved will the Americans be in the talks?

[Mish'al] I assume that after the talks with Peres, Clinton will come out and announce that he is sending Christopher on a five-day shuttle tour as early as 15 December. Furthermore — and this is the new element — he will promise Peres that he will back Christopher with telephone calls and cables, and, if necessary, he, too, will come to the Middle East to accelerate the process.

Moreover, Peres will be very flexible. He will say: I care nothing about procedure or the structure of the talks; I am willing to discuss a big peace. I want a big agreement with every Arab country via Damascus.

[Yavin] What is driving the Americans to be so involved, to be so eager to accelerate this process?

[Mish'al] In addition to the Rabin assassination factor, the defense establishment has received new information saying that, for the first time in a very long time, the top Syrian echelons have been discussing the possibility of a limited military action; I stress: a limited action. That really made the Americans sit up, because the Americans do not want any such action in the Middle East right now. This apprehension about such a military action will also be raised at tomorrow's talks. By the way, Israeli elements do not attach great significance to this news, although they are taking it into consideration. The Americans, however, were shaken by it, and this is what made them want to accelerate the process.

[Yavin] How important is the issue of early warning stations to Peres? Please combine it with the defense pact matter and what Peres termed: big peace.

[Mish'al] Regarding early warning stations, Peres will appear to exhibit great intransigence, but Dennis Ross has already informed the U.S. Administration and President Clinton that the agreement will not fall through over this issue; this is not going to be an obstacle. There are scores of alternatives. The Americans are ready to man the early warning stations. Another option speaks of stations manned by Israelis, Syrians, and Americans.

The defense pact issue will not be concluded tomorrow, although it will be raised. By the way, the Israelis are divided over whether Israel should go for it, but it will definitely be helpful as a wrapper for an agreement with Syria.

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Bureau Denies Rabin Promise

TA1112064295 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0600 GMT 11 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Prime Minister Shim'on Peres will confer with U.S. President Bill Clinton in Washington today. Our political correspondent Shlomo Raz reports that the Prime Minister's Bureau has denied a report alleging that the late Yitzhaq Rabin promised Clinton that Israel would withdraw to the international border on the Golan in accordance with its security needs.

Prime Minister Peres said that he would prefer to reach a peace agreement with Syria before a permanent arrangement with the Palestinians since this would create a climate conducive to the attainment of a better permanent arrangement.

Israel's Ambassador to Washington Itamar Rabinovich pointed out that the fate of the talks with Syria would not be finalized during the Peres-Clinton meeting, a meeting designed to lay the groundwork for U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's shuttle mission to our region. [passage omitted]

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English at 0500 GMT on 11 December adds that "Rabinovich said that the Syrians have stopped making ultimatums over early-warning stations on the Golan," and that "he regards this as a good sign."]

Beilin Comments on Rabin Proposal

TA1112090695 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0500 GMT 11 Dec 95

[Telephone interview with Minister Yosi Beilin by Ya'el Dan and Mikha Friedman; place not given — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Friedman] I would like to ask you about last night's television report that said in a tete-a-tete meeting the late Yitzhaq Rabin told Clinton that Israel would be willing to make a full withdrawal to the international border on the Golan Heights in exchange for adequate security arrangements, and that Clinton expects to hear the same commitment from Peres today. To the best of your knowledge — being very close, perhaps the closest to the prime minister — is there any truth to this report?

[Beilin] To the best of my knowledge, the late Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin's formula was that the depth of our withdrawal on the Golan Heights would be equal to the depth of the peace offered by Syria. This conditional formula is also guiding us at present, in anticipation of the resumption of the negotiations with Syria.

[Friedman] I would like to remind you that a few months ago, in an interview with Gadi Sukenik — who was still working for Channel 1 — Shim'on Peres recalled, as if in passing, the old government resolution of 19 June 1967 whereby Israel would be willing to withdraw to the international border on the Golan Heights in exchange for full peace with Syria.

[Beilin] This government resolution was made by a national unity government one week after the end of hostilities in the Six-Day War. It was approved both by Herut and the General Zionists [members of the Gahal Bloc, the Likud's precursor] and by the Labor Party. At the same time, it was never implemented because of the Syrians. At that time we were prepared to negotiate with the Syrians on the basis of this resolution with regard to the international border as well as Israel's security needs, not just the international border. The Americans relayed our proposal to the Syrians and they rejected it, and from then until 1991 there were actually no contacts between us and them. Does this mean that the resolution which was passed then and was never implemented because of the Syrians is still binding on the Israeli Government today? Not necessarily.

[Dan] The question is whether this possibility has resurfaced now, whether the formula of full peace in exchange for a withdrawal to the international border is a possibility.

[Beilin] I would say that both from the moral and stipulated points of view the Israeli Government is not committed to the resolution of 19 June 1967. At the same time, there is no doubt that when negotiating with Syria that resolution hovers somewhere in the background. The Syrians certainly know about its existence, and we cannot ignore it even when we say that the depth of our withdrawal would equal the depth of the peace. Having said that, I am definitely not saying that there is such an Israeli commitment nor that Clinton will receive a commitment from us to the effect that this resolution continues to be binding on us today.

[Friedman] You say that resolution was not implemented, while some say it was revoked. What is the truth?

[Beilin] The truth is that a different resolution was passed a year later saying that Israel must hang on to security areas on the Golan Heights, thereby actually canceling the former resolution. In any event, formally speaking, there is no doubt that the 1967 resolution is not binding on Israel today. However, as I said before, the very fact that such a resolution was passed at one time by a national unity government might be taken into account by all those currently involved in the negotiations with Syria.

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[Dan] We would like you to comment on another aspect of Nisim Mish'al's report last night concerning warnings of Syria's intention to set out on a limited military operation, and that those warnings may be the backdrop for the current acceleration of the process.

[Beilin] Such warnings have been a topic of discussion since 1973, because of what happened in 1973. The very fact that we want peace in order to prevent war is definitely true. Whether our wish to resume the negotiations with Syria stems from any specific fear of some kind of conflagration, I would not say so.

[Dan] You have not heard about such warnings recently.

[Beilin] I would rather suffice with what I said.

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 0505 GMT on 11 December carries a recorded interview with Israel's Ambassador to Washington Itamar Rabinovich by political correspondent Shlomo Raz. Asked whether Israel is committed to the decision of the Eshkol government to return to the international border on the Golan, Rabinovich replies: "First of all, the Eshkol government did not pass a decision to withdraw from the Golan. The Eshkol government, which was a national unity government, passed a decision which sort of outlined Israel's policy concerning an arrangement with Syria. It was not an operational decision, but an outline. Policy has changed several times since then. For instance, when the Eshkol government made this decision, on 19 June 1967, there was not even a single settlement on the Golan. Settlements have been built since then because nobody believed an arrangement between Israel and Syria would be possible in the ensuing state of affairs. The notorious Khartoum Conference in 1967 was held after that decision, and the conventional wisdom at that time was that Syria would not make an arrangement with Israel. Therefore, one cannot look at the decision of 1967 from the vantage point of the 1990's and see it as an operational decision applicable today."

[The same program carries a live interview with Deputy Defense Minister Ori Or by anchorman Arye Golan. Asked to comment on the report about the secret commitment given by the late Yitzhaq Rabin, Or says: "I am not responsible for all television reports and I do not want to state my opinion about what the late prime minister did or did not say. Also, I do not think this is a relevant issue. The question is whether we can advance with the Syrians toward a peace arrangement. The main issue is what the current prime minister says, and I do not want to go into what the late prime minister said. I do not think this would be fair on my part, since I do not know whether what was reported yesterday is true or not."

[Asked whether he knows about such a promise, Or replies: "I do not know about such a promise. The main question today is whether the Israeli Government led by Peres will be able to lead the process with the Syrians forward. This is the main issue which we are all dealing with today."]

Peres To Inform Knesset 'Price' for Syrian Peace

TA1012060495 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0505 GMT 10 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Shim'on Peres said that he will soon announce in the Knesset what price Israel is prepared to pay for an agreement with Syria. Peres talked with correspondents accompanying him on his flight to the United States. During a transit stop in Scotland, correspondent Shlomo Raz gave us this report:

[Begin Raz recording] In substance, the prime minister said almost nothing. Nevertheless, what he says shows us that the negotiations with Syria might be on the verge of a breakthrough. Quietly and looking totally at peace with himself and sure of his way, the prime minister said the following: The Syrians are sending messages that they are ready to listen to new proposals. The Arabs learned from the [prime minister's] assassination that we are not playing around, that we and the Likud are not the same thing. Peres said the Syrians are not insisting on the old proposals and are prepared to hear new proposals, and he added: Most of the people in Israel want peace and know what the price of peace with Syria is. The others want us to decide for them and free them from the dilemma. At this point, the prime minister made the most significant statement: Soon, and probably in the Knesset, I will publicly announce the price of the agreement.

The prime minister made some remarks about the character of the peace, which are also important. The security arrangements with Syria are different from those we have with Egypt. There will not be an agreement without security arrangements. The prime minister explained that the differences in security arrangements are due to the difference in geography between Israel and Syria compared to the geography between Israel and Egypt.

Without normalization there will not be peace, Peres said on his way to the United States to meet President Clinton. [end recording]

More Peres Comments on Price of Peace

TA1012120195 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1105 GMT 10 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Shim'on Peres landed in New York about half an hour ago and was

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immediately asked about his declaration during the flight that he would inform the Knesset what Israel is prepared to give in return for an agreement with Syria.

The prime minister said that he will inform the Knesset what the price will be for the agreement with Syria only after he learns what we will get in exchange from the Syrians. Our political correspondent Shlomo Raz, who is accompanying the prime minister, reports from New York:

[Begin recording] [Raz] The prime minister somewhat mellowed the wording he used with us before. Mr. Peres decided to clarify his remarks to the microphones.

[Peres] I said that I will inform the Knesset of the price I believe Israel has to pay only after I know what Israel will get in return. I am not prepared to make unilateral announcements about the price.

[Raz] In other words, you will make the announcement only after Christopher's shuttle, if we learn what al-Asad is prepared to give?

[Peres] If the Syrians announce it before Christopher's trip then I will announce it beforehand. It does not depend on a trip, it depends on developments.

[Raz] Is there a difference between the price you are prepared to pay now and what you said in the past about the Levi Eshkol government's decision [to return the Golan Heights]

[Peres] I know what you are referring to, and I do not have an answer to your question.

[Raz] On that, the prime minister is certainly sidestepping the question and does not want to reiterate what he said as foreign minister about the decision reached after the 1967 war.

[Anchorman Yoram Ronen] The decision of the national unity government was that Israel is prepared to descend from the Golan Heights in return for a peace accord with Syria.

[Raz] I think the decision refers to an Israeli preparedness to return to the international border. In the conversation we had with Mr. Peres on the flight, he said that without normalization there will be no agreement with Syria and that he does not know anybody who is prepared to withdraw beyond the international border. He also noted that security arrangements between Israel and Syria must be different from those between Israel and Egypt because of the geographic differences. I received the impression that Mr. Peres is very determined to continue the negotiations.

On a different matter, we asked him about the latest polls, and he said that he is not a collector of polls and does not lose his head over them when they favor him. He does his job whether he is popular or not.

We are now going into a very tight schedule. Today is mainly devoted to events with U.S. Jewry, especially the memorial for the late Prime Minister Rabin. [end recording]

Peres on Syria, Palestinians, Talks With NRP

TA0912142795 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0800 GMT 9 Dec 95

[Telephone interview with Shim'on Peres, prime minister and defense minister, by anchorman 'Adi Talmor and political correspondent Udi Segal on 9 December; place not given; from the weekly "In the Current Situation" program — recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Talmor] Good morning to Shim'on Peres, prime minister and defense minister.

[Peres] Good morning.

[Talmor] And a good morning to our political correspondent Udi Segal.

[Segal] Hello.

[Talmor] Mr. Peres, I assume that Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad will receive a copy of our interview with you translated into Arabic. Is there anything you would like to tell him after meeting with Mubarak, Husayn, and 'Arafat prior to your meeting with President Clinton?

[Peres] The main thing I would say is that the region is ripe for full peace and the completion of the peace process. I propose that we demonstrate leadership in order to close the circle of peace in the Middle East. Syria can make a large and substantive contribution, and I believe that this can be done in a relatively short time.

[Talmor] When you call on Hafiz al-Asad to show leadership, what does that require on his part?

[Peres] He should open up all the channels and understand that we both must convince our respective publics, as well as the other side, that we seriously intend to resolve our differences peacefully and create a future that is honorable and full of hope for the younger generation everywhere.

[Talmor] Is the practical implication of this to simply meet with you before anything else?

[Peres] I do not want to be that specific. You asked for my general message. I do not want to jump the gun and be more specific.

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[Segal] You constantly reiterate that the price of peace with Syria will not change even if 10 years pass. You have also said that the price of peace is more or less clear to you. Are you going to meet with President Clinton in order to announce this price, which is a full Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights with the final border being determined in negotiations?

[Peres] I have no intention of declaring in advance what I will discuss with the U.S. President. I prefer to wait for the meeting. Many people, however, have an idea as to what this entails.

[Talmor] A full withdrawal from the Golan Heights?

[Peres] I never said that, and I feel no need to do so now.

[Segal] At the time, Syrian President al-Asad spoke about full peace in exchange for full withdrawal. The Israeli formula posited that the depth of withdrawal would equal the depth of peace. Is this just a semantic difference? Are we actually talking about the same thing?

[Peres] There is a real difference here, because in the past, Israel returned all the land without always getting all the peace. We would like to see a warm peace similar to the one Israel has with Jordan — a peace of construction, development, and understanding. In other words, we want a change in the content of peace, in the nature of relations. It is not enough to demand various concessions from us without being very specific about the compensation proposed in exchange.

[Talmor] But, Mr. Peres, you know very well that when the peace treaty with Egypt was signed, everyone, including those who signed on Israel's behalf, believed it would be a warm peace. On paper, that was how things were supposed to be, while it did not turn out that way in practice. Who can guarantee that the same thing will not happen with Syria?

[Peres] The answer is that we must draw the appropriate conclusions from what happened in the past.

[Segal] Al-Asad could have made peace 18 years ago together with al-Sadat, but he wanted more then and continues to want more today. The Egyptians got all of the Sinai Peninsula back. What can we possibly give al-Asad that al-Sadat did not receive?

[Peres] Look, you are constantly trying to lead me in a direction I do not want to take. Do you want me to recite a menu of what al-Asad can or cannot receive? First of all, we can all get a new Middle East. Our countries can have a different future. These are great things. When we negotiated with Syria 18 years ago, for example, the Syrians were alone. The process did not include Lebanon or the other countries in the Arab world. In other words, there is a totally new perspective and periphery now that did not exist at the time.

[Talmor] Are you implying that we will accept Syria's de facto control over Lebanon in exchange for a peace treaty with us?

[Peres] Look, Syria did not ask for our permission in order to control Lebanon. The problem is not so much the question of our control. The real problem is with Lebanon's independence and the extent of the Israeli presence there. The Israeli army is deployed in Lebanon conditionally and for a limited period in the absence of other security arrangements. What I mean to say is that it is possible to reach an agreement with us on the kind of security arrangements that will not require our presence in Lebanon.

[Talmor] Nevertheless, Mr. Peres, in the past few days, whenever the possibility of an agreement with Syria was discussed, you have proposed a new formula that may ultimately comprise the option that the public will be presented with if and when a national referendum is held. You now posit a full withdrawal from the Golan Heights, not only in exchange for full peace with Syria but also in exchange for peace with almost all of the Arab world. Is this the formula that is designed to convince the Israeli public?

[Peres] I did not spell out the first part of the equation as explicitly as you did. I have not yet spoken about a full withdrawal from the Golan Heights, and I do not know if I will do so in the future. If, however, you are asking me whether we are talking about full regional peace, then the answer is affirmative.

[Segal] I would like to return to the Lebanon issue. Do your new proposals on the Syrian track include an explicit demand that the Syrians make efforts to ensure quiet in south Lebanon in order to facilitate serious negotiations which entail painful compromises?

[Peres] Look, I believe that one should come to negotiations with ideas, not demands. Let us assume that we present such a demand and fail to receive a positive reply. What then? Will we stop the negotiations? Will we let terrorists hold the negotiations hostage? I find that inconceivable. I will come with proposals. I feel that I should state quite clearly that negotiations must involve reciprocity on the part of both parties. I do not think that these negotiations will feature any unilateral concessions on either Syria's or Israel's part. We must discover a middle ground and meet each other halfway.

[Segal] Will the first stage merely involve proposals pertaining to negotiations procedures and the framework

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of the talks, or are we already talking about a comprehensive package incorporating proposals on substantive issues?

[Peres] It relates both to the nature of the negotiations and the goals. We did not formulate things in clauses or subclauses.

[Segal] In other words, you will not present a document to Clinton?

[Peres] No. I have absolutely no intention of presenting any documents.

[Talmor] On the other hand, Mr. Peres, the latest reports claim that some deal is being worked out under the table. After all, Dennis Ross did not spend over five hours with al-Asad and then meet with Israeli officials for nothing. Now you are going to see Clinton. Some change is expected this week following your meeting with the U.S. President. Could this perhaps be a dramatic and significant breakthrough?

[Peres] I would say that the atmosphere has improved, but I would definitely not describe this as the result of some kind of indirect or direct agreement. Doing that would simply be wrong.

[Segal] Does the plan you will present to President Clinton recommend intensifying the U.S. involvement in the talks between Israel and Syria — for example, dispatching a special emissary who will spend several months in the region conducting intensive negotiations between Damascus and Jerusalem on a daily basis?

[Peres] In my opinion, the nature of negotiations should be flexible and varied. I would not limit the talks to specific channels but rather call for the use of different and varied approaches according to our need.

[Talmor] When you spoke about an improvement in the atmosphere, Mr. Peres, what exactly did you mean?

[Peres] Look, there is no doubt that something has happened in Syria as well. The assassination of Yitzhaq Rabin left a deep impression on them as well. You know, many Arab states and leaders thought that all the political differences in Israel were merely child's play. This terrible murder has forced them to understand for the first time that the Israeli public is polarized by very serious disagreements, and we cannot afford to simply wait for this problem to resolve itself in time. I think that the Arab leaders are beginning to realize that we do not have all the time in the world and must move forward.

[Talmor] Were similar sentiments expressed in the messages you recently heard from Damascus through Dennis Ross?

[Peres] Look, the main message I received from Damascus said that the Syrian leadership is eager to hear what Israel has to say, as well as any new proposals, thoughts, or approaches. I cannot say that I received a message from Damascus affirming Syria's readiness to do A, B, and C.

[Segal] After you meet with President Clinton, will the United States — perhaps through Secretary of State Warren Christopher — present Hafiz al-Asad with a comprehensive package to which he will be asked to answer either yes or no?

[Peres] I do not think so. I believe that would be a mistake. I think that if we present him with a precooked proposal, he will reject it. I feel that the process should be cooked together by all the participants, with each party being able to raise or lower the flames or add this or that ingredient. I think that any approach that posits preconditions is mistaken.

[Talmor] On the other hand, Mr. Peres, and contrary to everything you have said until now, you have probably heard the claim that the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] is not retaliating against the terrorists' actions in south Lebanon with suitable force out of fear of harming the negotiations with Syria. What is your reaction to this assertion?

[Peres] God forbid. The IDF reacts in a professional manner, and its military policy is not influenced by political calculations. The IDF responds as required in accordance with its sensitivities and the potential effect it can gain by retaliation.

[Segal] Today, 9 December, marks the eighth anniversary of the outbreak of the intifadah. In another three weeks, the Palestinians, who already control the Gaza Strip, will assume control over most of the West Bank. Looking back, do you agree that the popular uprising in the territories started the process that ultimately led to the Oslo agreements?

[Peres] Not as far as I am concerned. I always felt that our rule over the Palestinian people was a mistake, that we would pay the price, and that it had no future and was pointless. I supported the Gaza First idea as far back as 15 or 20 years ago. For me, it is nothing new. I am very glad that Yitzhaq Rabin and I signed the Oslo agreements because the end of this month will mark the first time since 1967 that we will not be ruling over another people.

[Talmor] You, however, contrary to the late Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin, are opposed to separation between Israel and the territories. You are opposed to a dividing line that is fenced off, which would actually constitute a border for all intents and purposes. Why do

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you oppose this when the Israeli citizens who live along the dividing line are so frightened?

[Peres] First of all, I am not sure that Yitzhaq Rabin supported a separation line in the form of a fence. He was in favor of the idea of a separation line but not its physical implementation. I do not rule this out. If we constructed a fence along the Green Line, however, we would wake up one morning only to discover that the fence had become a border. Yitzhaq Rabin and I, as well as others, said that we would not return to the 1967 borders. By erecting a fence, however, we would be establishing such a line which would initially have merely a psychological meaning but would ultimately take on political significance. Moreover, it is not at all clear whether such a fence would indeed bring about the desired security. As opposed to the Gaza Strip, we have outlying settlements in the West Bank which have to be protected. Therefore, all the talk about a fenced-off separation line appears slightly half-baked to me.

[Segal] The Palestinians claim that Israel has violated the agreement with regard to the female prisoners. Will you again ask President 'Ezer Weizman to pardon these female prisoners, thereby honoring the clause you signed?

[Peres] Yes, I will appeal to him.

[Talmor] With your permission, Mr. Peres, let us turn to domestic politics. Following Rabin's assassination, many people in Labor have said that the best thing would be to bring the elections forward as much as possible in order to capitalize on the public's sympathy. Why did you decide against this possibility, or are you still considering it?

[Peres] The answer is that I did not want to exploit the feelings shown in the wake of the assassination for scoring political gains. Look, everyone has to consider not only short-term advantages but also historical fairness [last word in English]. I would have felt very bad about myself had we tried to turn such a great tragedy into partisan gain.

[Segal] Do you not believe that the feelers sent out by Labor in the National Religious Party's [NRP] direction amount to a political mistake, because they are driving a wedge between Labor and Meretz and may cost you votes in the next election?

[Peres] I do not know what you mean by sending out feelers. I know that the NRP has accepted the Oslo A and Oslo B accords. I do not see any possible controversy between us and them on this issue until the elections on 29 October 1996. An arrangement with the NRP will not prevent us from conducting negotiations with Syria. Naturally, we will have to fulfill our promise — namely, if we reach an agreement, we will submit it for a national referendum. Furthermore, we are not talking about bringing the NRP into the coalition but about the NRP's abstaining in votes on no-confidence motions during this government's tenure — which is certainly logical. It is impossible to conduct affairs according to the desires of various groups. One must also rely on fundamental and healthy logic.

[Talmor] Five weeks after Yitzhaq Rabin's assassination, after hearing so many reports and so much speculation, do you know and understand precisely what happened in Malkhey Yisra'el Square five weeks ago?

[Peres] I think I do. Unfortunately, I must say that even today there are several hundred people in Israel who believe it is possible to solve problems with guns. This is a dangerous, cruel, intoxicated, and monstrous group. We are facing a small-scale but extremely dangerous disease, and we must deal with it with all seriousness.

[Talmor] You are probably familiar with the opposition's claims that you are using the present situation to eradicate or at least settle scores with the opposition in a manner that is not very democratic.

[Peres] We are not dealing with the opposition in this case but rather with murderers. I am surprised with the opposition for taking this campaign against the murderers as a campaign against the opposition. We do not want to make generalizations or to put the blame on groups or institutions that denounced the murder. We are not dealing with any of those who subscribe to the commandment "Thou shalt not kill." We are focusing our operations on those who ignore this commandment.

[Talmor] Major General Dani Yatom, your military secretary, spoke about a terrible failure on the part of the Shin Bet. Following this grave incident and the serious blow to the Shin Bet, has its mode of operation changed in order to deal with the new threat posed by dangerous extremist groups?

[Peres] The state of alert has undoubtedly been heightened, and the protection around VIP's has been tightened. We learned all the lessons possible. For fairness' sake, however, I must say that there is another side to the story and that the Shin Bet has scored very impressive achievements in preventing terrorism, apprehending terrorists, and liquidating terror squads. These are extremely important things.

Two lessons can be learned from the assassination: one, the obligation to prevent murder; two, the obligation to prevent the murder from achieving its objective, which is putting an end to the peace process. Look, many people are in favor of peace, but only a few are in favor of paying the price of peace. There is no such

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thing as peace for free. Yitzhaq's greatness was in his willingness to carry the heavy burden of peace. He paid with his life because he did not feign on the issue of peace; he could have filled the annals of history with excuses, stories, and fairy tales, but instead he walked along streets crowded with angry people who shouted that he was a traitor and a murderer. He was undaunted and continued on and on until he paid the ultimate price. We cannot bring him back to life, but we must pursue his path.

Syria Said To Drop 'Ultimatum' on Warning Stations

TA1012201695 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 2000 GMT 10 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Itamar Rabinovich, Israel's ambassador to the United States, says the Syrians are no longer posing an ultimatum with regard to the early warning stations on the Golan as they did last summer, and that is a favorable development. He told our correspondent Shlomo Raz that the fate of the negotiations with Syria will not be determined in Prime Minister Peres' meeting with President Clinton tomorrow, adding that the purpose of tomorrow's meeting is to lay the foundation for Warren Christopher's shuttle mission, which will last weeks and possibly months.

Minister Yosi Beilin says the Syrian president has reservations about normalization with Israel, mainly because it will necessitate openness to Western culture. From al-Asad's viewpoint, Israeli tourists roaming the streets of Damascus pose a problem. Minister Beilin believes that, despite the reservations, cooperation between Israel and its neighbors can be based on infrastructure and tourism projects. He made these remarks at a convention of the Industrialists Association, and they were reported by our correspondent Yo'av Ya'aqov.

Shahaq: Golan Heights 'Irreplaceable' in Wartime

TA1012124195 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1105 GMT 10 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] There is no replacement for the Golan Heights. Its importance in time of war is obvious, Lieutenant General Amnon Shahaq, the chief of staff, told Haifa high school students before their conscription to the IDF [Israel Defense Forces]. Shuli Scheinwald reports:

[Begin recording] [Scheinwald] There is no replacement for the Golan Heights. If we have to fight for the defense of the north of the country either in the Hula or at al-Qunaytirah, then the choice is obvious: The preference for the Golan Heights is outright, Gen. Shahaq said.

[Shahaq] I believe that there is no argument among Israelis that if there is a risk of war at the end of a process, then the Golan Heights has irreplaceable strategic value. A sophisticated economy and electronic systems can help, but they cannot replace the Golan Heights in importance if there is a need to go to war.

[Scheinwald] At the same time, the chief of staff said the main question is not what is more important if war breaks out, but what peace there will be, and if there is peace, where we should compromise.

The chief of staff is touring Haifa as a guest of the mayor. [end recording]

Merom Calls For '2nd Camp David,' End to Shuttle

TA0912132295 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1200 GMT 9 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Knesset Member Hagay Merom, chairman of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, is proposing to convene a second Camp David conference with the participation of Israeli and Syrian leaders and the heads of the U.S. Administration in a bid to work out a peace agreement. In anticipation of Prime Minister Shim'on Peres' departure to Washington, Merom says that the shuttles of the U.S. peace team, which have proven ineffective, should be terminated; instead, the leaders of the three countries should be brought together. Merom believes that the Syrian answer to this proposal will prove whether it is heading toward peace or merely embracing peace tactics. Our correspondent Yo'el Nir reports that Hagay Merom met with Prime Minister Shim'on Peres last week.

Netanyahu on Peace With Syria, U.S. Pact

TA0812181195 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1500 GMT 8 Dec 95

[Telephone interview with Likud Chairman Binyamin Netanyahu by David Essing; place and date not given]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] [Essing] Prime Minister Peres and his aides have been tight-lipped about their plans, saying Israel and Syria should return to the negotiating table without preconditions. Peres has dropped the late Prime Minister Rabin's demand that Syria keep its word to hold the military officers talks. At the same time, the prime minister denies he has also given up the idea of Israeli-manned early warning stations on the Golan. Peres says it is possible to bridge the Syrian gap, but he is not certain this will happen.

Likud leader Binyamin Netanyahu warns the new government will be softer on giving up all the Golan Heights to Syria.

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[Netanyahu] Well, I think it's clear that this government will go even further than where Mr. Rabin was willing to take the process. The hand brake that he exercised on further withdrawals and further concessions has been pretty much removed. That is, if there is any change, it is not in the Syrian demands, but in the Israeli willingness to accommodate these demands, and I think this is the new factor that we must consider — that Israel is prepared to essentially go to the ends to meet the Syrian demands and now it's a question not of whether Mr. Peres wants to give, but whether Mr. al-Asad wants to receive, and we shall find very soon if he wants to receive. It's his for the taking.

[Essing] But if al-Asad is willing to give Israel adequate security arrangements, perhaps even with some kind of American involvement, an active American involvement — is this not good enough deal for Israel to try and resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict?

[Netanyahu] If by adequate security arrangements you mean getting off the Golan Heights — that is inadequate. There is no substitute for our being on the Golan Heights. What will happen? Mr. al-Asad will withdraw his tanks two hours more? So it will take him two hours more driving time to get to the edge of the cliff. What will we have? A satellite in the sky to tell us that a sea of Syrian tanks is approaching us sometime in the future?

If you want peace then [word indistinct] one must recognize that in our part of the world peace is based on strength and on deterrence; that you have to be prepared to deter war if you want to keep the peace. And to have Israel sign a piece of paper, a peace treaty, with all the best intentions — I am being generous — assuming the best intentions on the part of Syria, yet giving up the other condition of peace — other than sincerity — giving up the condition of genuine security — we shall not have peace. This is the most important lesson of the 20th century, that opposite dictatorial regimes the only way to maintain the peace — and it's possible to maintain the peace — is to maintain your strength. If you give up your strength, you will have the opposite of peace. We should have learned this lesson by now, because the Jewish people more than any other nation in history has paid a terrible price for well-intentioned statesmen who could not make this simple distinction.

[Essing] You do not put much faith, then, in perhaps a stronger American alliance with Israel, perhaps even an outright defense pact?

[Netanyahu] We never conceived this defense cooperation as being a substitute for Israel's direct capacity to defend its borders. We never dreamed that the United States would be charged with defending us against a possible Syrian onslaught in the future. That is the core, one of the basic foundations of the renascent Jewish state, renascent Jewish sovereignty, that Israel or a Jewish force will defend the Jewish state. And I am afraid if one is considering an Israeli-American defense pact that would abrogate this principle, that is not a good idea. If one is talking about a formal alliance which would leave Israel with the ability to defend itself and not constrict our defenses, then I am all for it.

Peres Sees End of 'Rule' in Territories in 3 Weeks

TA0812125295 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1005 GMT 8 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Before leaving for the Gaza Strip to meet with Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasir 'Arafat, Prime Minister Shim'on Peres made a speech in Tel Aviv in which he said that within three weeks, Israel would no longer rule over the Palestinians in Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip. Peres asserted that while Jerusalem would always remain a closed issue in the political sense, it would be an open city from the religious aspect. Shim'on Peres was speaking to students affiliated with the Labor Party in Tel Aviv. Our correspondent Yo'av Yo'az reports from Tel Aviv's Bet Lessin auditorium:

[Begin recording] [Yo'az] Prime Minister Shim'on Peres sounded very decisive in his speech to the first convention of Labor Party students in Bet Lessin. In a question and answer session which ended just a short while ago, the students asked all the important questions on foreign and domestic political issues and on the recent manifestations of violence in Israeli society. Here is what Shim'on Peres had to say about the concept of physical separation between Israel and the Palestinians in the territories, if and when the parties eventually agree on a permanent arrangement.

[Peres] We have three problems with a fence. Let us say we build a fence along the Green Line, what about the Israeli settlements on the other side of the fence? Will we defend them or not? There is also another problem. If we put up a fence along the Green Line, it may become the border between us and the Palestinians. No one wants this. The third question pertains to whether or not such a fence is effective?

[Yo'az] Shim'on Peres added that three weeks from now, Israel would no longer rule over the Palestinians in Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip. The idea is coming along nicely, Peres said. All the areas in Judaea and Samaria densely populated by Palestinians — which comprise some 450 villages and seven large towns — will soon be under the Palestinian autonomy. As for

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Jerusalem, Peres said that the city would not become a second Berlin and no wall would divide it.

[Peres] We are convinced that Jerusalem must remain a single, united city. We will not turn Jerusalem into a Berlin or build a wall inside it. It is open from the religious aspect. In other words, believers and pilgrims from all faiths can freely come to worship there; however, politically it is a closed issue.

[Yo'az] Peres said that Israel has no intention of granting the right of return to the 1948 refugees. The Oslo agreement speaks about reaching an arrangement with regard to the Palestinians displaced in the 1967 war. Peres stressed that the government would reject any solution that undermines Israel's character as a Jewish state.

Health Minister Efrayim Sne, who spoke before Prime Minister Peres, said that the public now expects the Labor Party to be the party of security to the same degree that it is the party of peace. [end recording]

Sarid on Palestinian State, Golan Withdrawal

TA0912164295 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1600 GMT 9 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Minister Yosi Sarid says Meretz will not accept any functional solution in the West Bank and will try to lead the government toward establishing a Palestinian state. Our political correspondent Shlomo Raz reports that refering to the peace negotiations with Syria, Sarid said this is possible only in exchange for an Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights to the international border. Sarid said this is a heavy and painful price, but there is no alternative. Syria will also have to pay a heavy price, and strict attention will have to be paid to the security arrangements, normalization, and ensuring our water resources. Minister Sarid made these remarks at a convention of Meretz activists in Jerusalem.

Shahal: No Alternative to Separation From Palestinians

TA1012074595 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0600 GMT 10 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Minister for Internal Security Moshe Shahal said that there is no alternative to a separation between us and the Palestinians. He is displeased that instead of a 20 km separation fence in Samaria there is currently only a 12 km fence. The most important and difficult test will be in the coming days when the IDF's [Israel Defense Forces] withdrawal from West Bank cities is completed, the minister said. He is concerned that there are people who will exploit the situation for their own benefit. The test for the Palestinian police will be the way it deals with these offenders, he said.

In reference to the wave of vehicle thefts, Shahal said the problem is a lack of manpower. The minister set up a committee that will recommend stopping the sale of secondhand vehicle parts from the territories. He said that in the past month the police have caught 140 car thieves along the dividing line.

Settlers Riot in Hebron; Police Investigating

TA0812161795 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1600 GMT 8 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Several settlers rioted in the Avraham Avinu neighborhood of Hebron this afternoon. Our correspondent Gay Qotev was told by the Judaea and Samaria District Police headquarters that a lock on an Arab-owned shop in the area was broken, but nothing was taken from the shop. The Police launched an investigation into the incident.

Nabulus Resident Killed by IDF Gunfire

TA0812161095 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1500 GMT 8 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] A resident of Nabulus was killed this afternoon from shots directed at Arab rioters by the IDF [Israel Defense Forces].

Nabulus residents told our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem that the man killed is Talal Abu-'Isa, aged 20.

Canadian Businessman Funding 'Amir Defense Named

TA0912134295 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 9 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Sam Spodak, an Orthodox Jew from Toronto, has been identified as the person who is funding the defense for Yig'al and Hagay 'Amir. Yig'al is charged with the murder of Prime Minister Rabin while his brother, Hagay, with conspiracy to commit murder.

The Canadian businessman, known for his extreme right-wing views, came to Israel and visited the 'Amir family immediately after the assassination and offered to bear the legal costs. He then returned to Toronto where he tried to raise additional funds for the cause. Spodak is known to have real estate holdings in Jerusalem.

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Iranian Diplomat Expelled for Inciting Attacks

NC0912135895 Paris AFP in English 1313 GMT 9 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Amman, Dec 9 (AFP) — Jordan ordered the expulsion of Iranian diplomat Said Batni [name as received] on Saturday [9 December] for allegedly trying to incite an attack on Israeli tourists, a senior official said.

The first secretary at Iran's embassy was declared "persona non grata," in the first such decision against an Iranian diplomat posted in Amman, the official said.

It was unclear how long Batni, who has been posted here for the last two years, was given to leave the country on charges of "activities incompatible with his status as a diplomat." His embassy declined to comment.

The expulsion order came after a resident of the southern town of Ma'an accused Batni of inciting him to attack Israelis visiting the tourist sites of nearby Petra.

The diplomat also "concealed his movements" in southern Jordan, according to the Jordanian official.

Iran recalled 21 of its 26 diplomats in Amman in February 1994 after Jordan asked for the mission to be scaled down to balance the number of its diplomats in Tehran.

The two countries restored diplomatic relations on January 15, 1991 after a 10-year break initiated by Tehran because of Amman's support for Baghdad in the 1980-1988 war between Iran and Iraq.

Iran is a fierce opponent of the Middle East peace process, while Jordan signed a peace treaty with Israel in October 1994.

Paper Reports on Expulsion

JN1012101695 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 10 Dec 95 p 1

[FBIS Translated Text] Amman — AL-RA'Y— A responsible source yesterday confirmed to AL-RA'Y that the Jordanian Government yesterday decided to consider Taher Taheri, second secretary at the Iranian Embassy in Amman, [name and title as received] as persona non grata for carrying out activities incompatible with his status as a diplomat in Jordan.

The sources said that the Foreign Ministry yesterday informed the Iranian Embassy in Amman of this decision according to diplomatic norms, which stipulate that the other side should respect the official decision of the state and immediately implement it.

New agencies had earlier cited a responsible source as saying that the Iranian diplomat, who has been working in Amman for two years, was detained by the police in Ma'an after a citizen accused him of trying to incite an attack against Israeli tourists in Petra.

Iran Approves Appointment of Ambassador

JN1012085895 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 10 Dec 95 p 20

[FBIS Translated Text] Amman — AL-DUSTUR — The Jordanian Government received the Iranian Government's approval to appoint His Excellency Shaykh Nuh Salman al-Qudah as the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan's ambassador extraordinaire and plenipotentiary to the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Seizure of Iraq-Bound Missile Parts Confirmed

JN0912091595 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 9 Dec 95 pp 1, 7

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Amman—Jordanian officials on Friday confirmed that authorities had intercepted a consignment of missile parts being shipped to Iraq in violation of the international sanctions against that country, and the official Iraqi media denied that the Baghdad government was involved in the shipment.

The officials, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the consignment of Russian gyroscopes—which could be used in manufacturing missiles—had arrived at Queen Alia International Airport (QAIA) aboard a Royal Jordanian (RJ) plane from Moscow in the second week of November. The crates were marked as electrical equipment.

"The authorities discovered that the boxes contained missile parts and the Jordanian government immediately informed the United Nations Sanctions committee," said an official.

"Subsequently, officials from the Sanctions Committee as well as the Ekeus group," the U.N. Special Commission (UNSCOM) on disarming Iraq, came to Jordan and inspected the equipment, added the official.

"All the details were noted down and entered into U.N. records by the U.N. officials before they left," said the official, who confirmed accounts by news agencies that the consignment was enough to equip "one hundred missiles."

The importer was identified as a businessman from Gaza holding a two-year Jordanian passport, (the name of the man cannot be published under standing Jordanian regulations) who was said to be operating an Amman-based import/export company.

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The authorities kept a watch for the businessman to turn up to claim the consignment, but he failed to show up, said the official, adding "the man is no longer in Jordan."

The French news agency (AFP), quoting an unidentified official, reported that the businessman had fled Jordan and was hiding in Iraq. According to the agency, the consignment was worth $25 million.

The Iraqi News Agency (INA) said Friday the Baghdad government was not involved in the shipment and that it had warned a "Jordanian middleman" against trying to send such equipment to Iraq.

The agency said the middleman, whom it did not identify, had approached the Iraqi government with "samples" of "dual purpose" equipment in early 1994, and that Baghdad had not only turned down the offer but also wrote an official letter to the man, a copy of which was also sent to UNSCOM.

The agency report suggested the equipment could have been used for civilian purposes as well as in the manufacture of missiles with a range of under 150 kilometres.

Under the terms of the U.N. resolutions, Iraq is permitted to produce missile with a range of under 150 kilometres. But the gyroscopes intercepted in Amman could arm long-range Scud-missiles, according to news agency reports.

The middleman renewed the offer to send "contraband material" to Iraq in 1995, and was again turned down by "an Iraqi industrial organisation," the agency said, quoting an unidentified government official.

Under the terms of the sweeping international embargo in force since its Aug. 2, 1990 invasion of Kuwait, Iraq is banned from importing military equipment or possessing missiles with a range of more than 150 kilometres.

It was the first such announcement of the seizure of military equipment in Jordan en route to Iraq since the U.N. sanctions were imposed.

Most of Iraq's authorized imports of food and medicine passes through al-'Aqabah. Lloyd's of London is in charge of monitoring goods to check for violations of the sanctions.

The seizure of gyroscopes was seen as a serious blow to Iraq's attempts to lobby for a lifting of the crippling sanctions.

"It comes at the worst time for Iraq which is preparing to send its prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz to plead at the United Nations for a lifting of the embargo," and Arab diplomat told AFP.

Mr. 'Aziz is to visit Amman on Sunday on his way to New York.

UNSCOM chairman Rolf Ekeus said in October that Iraq had misled his inspectors about its weapons stockpiles, and may still have chemical and biological warheads as well as components to convert missiles to long-range use.

General Husayn Kamil, the mastermind of Iraqi military programmes, defected to Jordan on Aug. 8 and warned that Baghdad was still trying to obtain weapons and was negotiating with Moscow to buy 4,000 tanks.

Minister Confirms Weapons Confiscated

JN0912103095 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1000 GMT 9 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti has said the visit which he will make to Qatar today falls within the context of the special relations between His Majesty King Husayn and His Highness Shaykh Hamad Bin-Khalifah Al Thani, the Qatari amir.

He said that during his visit to Doha, he will discuss with Qatari officials bilateral ties, developments in the Middle East peace process, and the situation in Iraq and the suffering of its people, as well as other current issues on the Arab, regional, and world arenas.

Al-Kabariti confirmed that Jordan has confiscated weapons at Amman airport which were destined for Iraq via Jordan. He said the matter concerns advanced guidance equipment used in long-range missiles.

He underlined, once again, that Jordan will not allow any activity hostile to Iraq from its territory. Al-Kabariti denied that the efforts which Jordan is exerting for the sake of achieving an Iraqi reconciliation can be considered intervention in Iraq's affairs.

Al-Kabariti on Meeting To Debate Iraq's Future

NC1012133995 Paris AFP in English 1313 GMT 10 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Doha, Dec 10 (AFP)—Jordan is considering hosting a meeting of the Iraqi opposition to debate the future of Iraq, Jordanian Foreign Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti said here Sunday [10 December].

Al-Kabariti, on a brief visit to Qatar, told AFP that Jordan was not recommending a federal Iraq but said "federalism is one solution among others" for the future of the country.

Jordan has "two goals: to end the suffering of the Iraqi people and preserve the country's unity," he said after a

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meeting with Qatari amir Shaykh Bin-Hamad Khalifah *Al Thani*.

He said there could be "a meeting in Amman of representatives of the Iraqi opposition factions from abroad and from within (the country) which would try to reach an agreement on these two goals and find a way of allowing the Iraqi people to decide on the constitutional future of Iraq."

"We have no ready solution in Jordan," al-Kabariti added, stressing there was "no Jordanian plot to divide Iraq." [passage omitted]

Sources Cited on Iraqi Opposition Conference

JN0912124295 Amman AL-MASHRIQ in Arabic 11-18 Dec 95 p 1

[Report by Muhammad al-Fayiz in Amman and Jum'ah al-Rawi in London]

[FBIS Translated Text] Highly-placed sources in Amman have said that an official invitation has been extended to the various sides in the Iraqi opposition—Sunni, Shiite, and Kurdish—to hold their conference in Amman, provided they agree on a plan of action.

The sources said that in his recent meeting with Iraqi opposition figures in London to sound them on the best solution for the Iraqi problem, King Husayn said that he would accept any solution for the future of Iraq if it is acceptable to the Iraqis. The sources said that Jordan did not insist on the presence or absence of anybody, making it easier for the preparatory committee to invite whoever it wants to the conference. The sources said that Jordan has no tools, or representatives, in a subtle allusion to General Husayn Kamil who is no longer sponsored by Jordan to solve the Iraqi problem.

The sources said that King Husayn heard the views of the Iraqi figures in London and asked them to unify their ranks, especially since a disaster is now looming on the Iraqi horizon five years after the sanctions. The Iraqi figures strongly opposed any possible role for Husayn Kamil because he was a primary accomplice in the regime's crimes. [Leading Iraqi opposition figure] Muhammad Bahr-al-'Ulum told the king that his leadership will not accommodate Husayn Kamil, Saddam's son-in-law, who defected to Jordan.

Saddam's Daughters Called 'Virtual Captives'

LD1012113095 London THE SUNDAY TIMES in English 10 Dec 95 p 20

[By Marie Colvin]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Saddam Husayn's two daughters, who left Iraq with their husbands four months ago, want to go home but are being held virtual captives in a royal palace in Jordan, according to an inside source.

The two women, Raghda and Rana, were tricked into leaving Iraq by Raghda's husband Husayn Kamil, who was fleeing for his life after working for years as one of Saddam's closest aides, according to the source.

They were kept incommunicado in a palace in Amman, the Jordanian capital, without access to television and did not even know for days after their arrival that Kamil, the minister of military industries, had made a dramatic broadcast announcing his defection and intention to try to overthrow Saddam.

While Saddam fumed in Baghdad at their apparent treachery, Raghda raged at her husband. "I hate him," she tells her few visitors.

The source, who has no sympathy with the sisters, denied that they were rewriting history in order to curry favour with their father now that exile has proved to be much less glamorous than their former pampered lifestyles.

The flight from Baghdad in early August was triggered by fear of Udai, Saddam's brutal son, who had encroached more and more on Kamil's power. After an incident in which Udai shot a relative for not handing over a rare sports car he coveted, Kamil feared for his life.

On the day of his departure after a confrontation with Udai he returned home to tell his wife to pack their luggage, saying that they would be travelling to Bulgaria where he did indeed have an appointment. Rana, who is, married to Saddam Kamil, the Iraqi dictator's head of security and Kamil's brother, received the same instructions.

Kamil, his brother, the two sisters and their children fled in the night across the desert to the border with Jordan where he requested asylum for all of them.

Not even the bodyguards among about 35 people in the convoy knew of his intentions.

Even King Husayn of Jordan was tricked. When Udai traveled to Amman and asked to see his sisters to make sure that they had come of their own free will, the king called the women in their quarters.

But Kamil's sister answered the phone and pretended to the king that she was one of Saddam's daughters. "We don't want to see Udai," she said. "We know what we are doing and we are with our husbands." The king barred Udai from seeing his sisters and told him to return to Baghdad.

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To deceive someone who grants you refuge is a deep insult in Arabic tradition. Saddam's two daughters are now under virtual house arrest. Kamil's sister is with them 24 hours a day, and they are not allowed to leave the palace unescorted.

Al-Kabariti on Gulf Ties, Iraq, Peace Process

JN0912134795 Amman Radio Jordan in English 1200 GMT 9 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Foreign Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti has said that his visit to Qatar today comes as part of the distinguished relations existing between his majesty the king and Emir of Qatar Shaykh Hamad Bin-Khalifah Al Thani.

He told the AL-WATAN daily of Qatar that the mutual understanding and continued dialogue between the two countries can set an example for inter-Arab relations. Mr. al-Kabariti said his talks with officials in the Gulf emirate will touch upon Jordanian-Qatari ties, developments of the Middle East peace process, and the situation in Iraq, specially the suffering of the Iraqi people there. Also high on the agenda, he said, would be a number of Arab, regional, and international issues.

When asked to comment on the Qatari delegation's walkout from the final session of the latest summit of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries in Oman, the minister emphasized that Qatar would continue to play a basic role in that region. He expressed hope that the issue would remain within its procedural framework.

The foreign minister confirmed that Jordan had intercepted a consignment of arms being shipped to Iraq. He said the missile parts were discovered as they arrived at the Amman airport. Mr. al-Kabariti restated that Jordan would not allow any party to carry out anti-Iraqi activities on its soil. He denied that Jordan's efforts, aimed at reaching national reconciliation in Iraq, were meant to meddle in Iraqi affairs. He said the Jordanian endeavors are just an attempt to help all Iraqi parties to sit at the table and reach joint understanding.

On Jordanian-Saudi ties, the foreign minister said his majesty the king had postponed a planned visit to Riyadh because of the latest illness of King Fahd. He did not mention a new date for the trip which, he said, would contribute to resuming the normal relations between the two countries.

Mr. al-Kabariti said he hoped Kuwait will take a step toward reconciliation with Jordan. He vowed that if that happened, Jordan would reciprocate with larger steps, noting that the country had previously done everything possible to close the gap with Kuwait.

The foreign minister renewed Jordan's commitment to the Middle East peace process and said Amman is contacting all parties concerned to pave the way for resumption of the peace march. He said he hoped a peaceful settlement between Syria and Israel could be concluded, noting that both parties had become able to meet requirements necessary for resuming their bilateral peace talks. Mr. al-Kabariti added that the two sides were willing to discuss their joint interest, as well as how to build a comprehensive peace in the entire region.

On Jordanian-Syrian ties, the foreign minister pointed out that they had improved following his recent meeting in Barcelona, Spain, with his Syrian counterpart Faruq al-Shar'. Mr. al-Kabariti described as excellent Jordan's relations with Egypt, noting that Jordan, which he said does not compete over roles with anyone, was seeking to maintain good ties with all parties.

JEA Head Arrested for Criticizing King in Lectures

JN0912102395 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1000 GMT 9 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Jordanian authorities today arrested Layth Shubaylat, the head of the Jordanian Engineers' Association [JEA]. Shubaylat belongs to the Islamic current and is opposed to peace with Israel.

The official source which disclosed the news said that Shubaylat was arrested after strongly criticizing Jordan's King Husayn during a news conference in Irbid, northern Jordan.

Charged With 'Maligning' King, 'Sedition'

JN1012090595 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 10 Dec 95 p 1

[FBIS Translated Text] Amman, PETRA — A judicial source has said that a motion has been filed by the people against Layth Shubaylat on charges of maligning his majesty the king and inciting sedition, in violation of the provisions of the Penal Code.

The source said the public prosecution subpoenaed Layth Shubaylat yesterday and placed him under the custody of a specialized public prosecutor who is handling the case. The prosecutor is currently interrogating the defendant about the charges brought against him in accordance with the standard procedures of the Penal Law.

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JEA Calls For 'Immediate Release'

JN1012091595 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 10 Dec 95 p 21

[Report by 'Awdah 'Awdah]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Jordanian Engineers Association [JEA] Council held an emergency meeting yesterday under the chairmanship of deputy doyen Engineer 'Azzam al-Hunaydi. The JEA Council decided to form a committee to defend doyen Engineer Layth Shubaylat, who was arrested yesterday. The committee comprises lawyers Zuhayr Abu- al-Raghib, Taysir Hawamidah, and Musa Hamdan. The council called for the immediate release of Shubaylat and decided to form a followup committee chaired by the deputy doyen and representatives of the JEA branches.

In another development, the council of the Trade Unions' doyens held an emergency meeting last night chaired by Engineer Tariq al-Tall to discuss the situation. The council will issue a statement on this matter this morning.

Islamic Action Front Regrets Arrest

NC0912150395 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1340 GMT 9 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Amman, 9 Dec (MENA)—Hamzah Mansur, Jordanian member of parliament and official spokesman of the Islamic Action Front's deputies bloc, has voiced regret over the arrest of Layth Shubaylat, former deputy and head the Jordanian Engineers Association. He said: We hoped that things would not have reached that level; this has been an issue of opinions and can be dealt with by dialogue.

In a statement to MENA, Mansur rejected the way in which Mr. Shubaylat was arrested. He said the arrest was made without permission from the prosecution. He added: Mr. Shubaylat could have been contacted by telephone or sent a memorandum. He would certainly have carried out a judicial request without hesitation.

Mansur said he held contacts with Jordanian Prime Minister al-Sharif Zayd Bin-Shakir, Deputy Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Ra'uf al- Rawabidah, and House of Representatives Speaker Sa'd Hayil al-Surur. They stressed to me that he was arrested due to a lecture he delivered in Irbid, he said.

Circles of the Islamic Action Front expressed hope that the Jordanian Government will reconsider its measures and release Mr. Shubaylat. If this is not possible, then the Front said it hopes his case will be considered by a civilian court, not the state security court.

Shubaylat is accused of attacking King Husayn in a lecture, which is against Jordanian law, that Shubaylat delivered in the northern city of Irbid in early November.

Jordanian security forces surrounded the house and office of Mr. Shubaylat, held his car and eldest son for some time, and did not allow lawyers to accompany him to the Amman police headquarters, where he was taken.

Justice Minister Speaks to Deputies

JN1012111595 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 10 Dec 95 pp 1, 7

[Report by Sa'idah Kilani "Special to the JORDAN TIMES"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Amman—The outspoken president of the Jordan Engineers Association (JEA) and independent Islamist-Layth Shubaylat, known for his forthright opposition to government's policies and to peace with Israel, was arrested Tuesday [5 December] on charges of sedition and slandering His Majesty King Husayn.

A judicial source was quoted by the Jordan News Agency, PETRA, as saying that a case had been filed against Mr. Shubaylat on charges of "violating the dignity of the King and encouraging sedition in violation of the penal code."

Replying to questions raised by Lower House of Parliament deputies in Saturday's session over Mr. Shubaylat's detention, the minister of justice, Hisham al-Tall, confirmed the arrest but confined his answer to reading out the PETRA report, which briefly outlined the judicial procedures taken against Mr. Shubaylat and the charges of which he is accused.

"Subpoena summoning Mr. Shubaylat to court was issued on behalf of the office of the prosecutor general. The prosecutor general (Mahmud Mansur 'Ubaydat) is in charge of the case and is investigating it in accordance with the law," Mr. al-Tall said.

The slander charges, based on what is believed to be a lecture Mr. Shubaylat delivered three weeks ago in Irbid, carry a maximum sentence of one to three years imprisonment, according to Mr. Shubaylat's lawyer, Jawad Yunis. However, Mr. Yunis denied that his client was accused of sedition, which carries a maximum sentence of life imprisonment.

Before and after his arrest, police carried out full inspection of Mr. Shubaylat's office and house, according to his wife, Rima. "The even tried to arrest Farhan," she said referring to her 20 year-old-son.

Opposition deputies criticised "the way in which police made the arrest and the inspection."

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"Mr. Shubaylat is a public figure," said Hamzah Mansur, spokesperson of the Islamic Action Front bloc in Parliament. "The manner in which he was arrested should correspond with his status. But, having security officers at his home and his office" is inappropriate.

Deputy Tujan Faysal also criticised what she said was the police breaking into Mr. Shubaylat's house and described it as an "unclever" move by the government.

Prior to his arrest, Mr. Shubaylat held a press conference in his lawyer's office, in which he heavily criticised the government's policies.

"They fooled the people they told them it's going to be milk and honey... but what is happening is that.. the prices are rising, and the dinar is in danger," Mr. Shubaylat charged before a group of journalists, unionists and parliamentarians. "In two weeks time, the price of bread is going to double and water is going to quadruple."

In reference to the government's recent criticism of the professional associations and the performance of the press, Mr. Shubaylat claimed that the government wants to "muzzle the voice of the opposition."

"There is no democracy. They cracked down on Parliament by introducing the one-person, one vote law; they cracked down on and threatened all political parties that are in the opposition camp while those who approve of their policies were offered scholarships and grants," charged Mr. Shubaylat.

"And now because the professional associations are the strongest institutions legally and historically," the government wants to crack down on them, he said, adding that "The government does not want these associations to be a legal entity to rally against price hikes."

"I might be taken to prison. I might be condemned, but when I am in prison the government will be in prison too," said Mr. Shubaylat, who is expected to appear before the prosecutor general today.

The professional associations, the JEA in particular, have been at loggerheads with the government mainly over peace with Israel. Several associations have threatened their members with dismissal if they normalised relations with Israel. The King called twice in the past month on the "silent majority" to come out and express its support for peace. He also called on the associations to leave politics to politicians.

Mr. Shubaylat, a former deputy, was convicted and sentenced in 1994 to 20 years in jail on charges that he belonged to an illegal Islamic political group called Shabab al-Nafir, the Vanguards of Islamic Youth, which aims at toppling the regime. He was also convicted of acquisition of illegal automatic weapons and explosives. At the time, Mr. Shubaylat condemned the trial and accused the government of faking it in order to silence him.

Mr. Shubaylat was freed shortly thereafter after the King issued a general amnesty.

Upon release from jail, the independent Islamist announced that he was quitting politics because of what he alleged was the silence of political groups against serious violations of democracy. The former deputy did not contest the Amman Third District seat in the 1993 parliamentary elections. But he came back to the scene when he won the JEA presidency in 1994.

A journalist from the Islamist weekly al-Sabil newspaper, Yasir Abu-Hilalah, was detained by police for a few hours after taking pictures of Mr. Shubaylat's arrest. The journalist told the JORDAN TIMES after his release that his detention order was issued by Prosecutor General 'Ubaydat.

Associations Join To Defend Shubaylat

JN1112111095 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 11 Dec 95 pp 1, 7

[Report by Sa'idah Kilani "Special to the JORDAN TIMES"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Amman—The outspoken president of the Jordan Engineers Association (JEA), Layth Shubaylat, who was arrested Saturday on charges of slandering His Majesty King Husayn, was ordered held for 15 days without bail, Attorney General Mahmud 'Ubaydat said Sunday.

"Until now we haven't received a request for bail," Major 'Ubaydat said. "Investigations will continue in the case."

Maj. 'Ubaydat told the Jordan Times that Mr. Shubaylat had not been questioned on Sunday and charges against him had not been finalised.

Mr. Shubaylat, an independent Islamist, surrendered to the authorities on Saturday after being accused of slandering the King.

The charges, which are believed to be based on lectures Mr. Shubaylat gave in the last two months, are considered as an offense and not a crime, his lawyer, Jawad Yunis asserted. They carry a maximum sentence of three years.

Mr. Yunis said he was ordered off the case because he refused to hand in a letter of attorney before he meets

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with Mr. Shubaylat alone. Maj. 'Ubaydat said that the lawyer was not aware of the law.

"How can I let him talk to Mr. Shubaylat while he refuses to give me the letter of attorney?" Maj. 'Ubaydat asked. "I have suspended the investigation until Shubaylat appoints another lawyer. But Mr. Shubaylat insisted on Mr. Yunis' presence."

Maj. 'Ubaydat said that Mr. Yunis was not ordered off the case and that he was called Monday to represent Mr. Shubaylat.

Ten professional associations meanwhile announced they had decided to form a committee to defend Mr. Shubaylat. It consists of three lawyers: Zuhayr Abu-al-Raghib, Taysir Hawamidah and Musa Hamdun. The associations also decided to send a telegramme to the King requesting an audience.

The JEA council called for forming committees to attend Mr. Shubaylat's trial and follow up the case.

JEA Vice President 'Azzam Hunaydi told the Jordan Times that the JEA council was also exerting efforts to meet with the concerned officials to discuss the issue. He said the "associations issue" should be solved through dialogue and called on the government to be more open towards what he called the other opinion.

"We will call on the government to accept the other opinion and freedom of expression," Mr. Hunaydi said.

The professional associations, the JEA in particular, have been at loggerheads with the government mainly over peace with Israel. Several associations have threatened their members with dismissal if they normalised relations with Israel.

In a speech delivered last month before army and intelligence officers, the King called on the "silent majority" to come out and express its support for peace. He criticised the performance of professional associations, especially the engineering and the medical associations which had threatened their members against participating in the Middle East and North Africa economic summit that was held here last October. In his speech, the King questioned if that was democracy or dictatorship and called on the associations to leave "politics for politicians."

Mr. Shubaylat, a former deputy, was convicted in 1992 to 20 years in jail on charges that he belonged to an illegal Islamic group called Shabab al-Nafir (the Vanguards of islamic Youth) which aimed at toppling the regime. He was also convicted of acquisition of illegal weapons.

Mr. Shubaylat was freed shortly thereafter after the King issued a general amnesty. Upon release from jail, the independent Islamist announced that he was quitting politics because of what he said was the silence of political groups over "violations of democracy." He came back to the scene when he won the JEA presidenty two years later.

Shubaylat Sentenced to Death in 1992

JN0912122495 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1200 GMT 9 Dec 95

[Report by Randah Habib in Amman]

[FBIS Translated Text] Layth Shubaylat, head of the Jordanian Engineers Association, was arrested today. He was charged with insulting the king and instigating sedition in contravention of Article 195 of the penal code. If convicted, Shubaylat may be given a five-year prison term.

Last month, Shubaylat gave a lecture in the city of Irbid in which he maligned King Husayn and the leader of the Great Arab Revolt, Husayn Bin-'Ali. Shubaylat cast doubt on the role of the Hashemite family in preserving Palestinian rights and accused them of selling out these rights.

Shubaylat, who opposes the Israeli-Jordanian peace treaty, is regarded as an independent Islamist. He was sentenced to death in 1992 when he was a member of the Jordanian House of Representatives after being accused of plotting to topple the regime. However, he was released after a short period of confinement following a royal amnesty.

An official source said that Shubaylat's behavior constitutes a violation of the law and cannot be tolerated. Failure to enforce the law will harm democracy, he said.

Muslim Militant Pleads Not Guilty to Slander

JN1012114395 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 10 Dec 95 p 3

[Report by Rana al-Husayni "Special to the JORDAN TIMES"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Amman—Muslim militant 'Ata Abu-Rishtah, 53, accused of slander against His Majesty King Husayn, and belonging to an illegal organisation, Saturday pleaded not guilty to both charges.

Mr. Abu-Rishtah, spokesman for the illegal Hizb al-Tahrir, who earlier confessed to slandering the King in an Oct. 6 newspaper interview, told the court that he was innocent of all charges after the state prosecutor general read the charge sheet.

At the beginning of the court session 'Abd-al-Fattah Lafi, one of three attorneys defending Mr. Abu-Rishtah,

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contested for the third time the court's jurisdiction to hear the case.

During the past month, Mr. Abu-Rishtah's attorneys claimed that the case should be heard at civil courts "because it is a Press and Publications Law case."

The lawyers insisted that Mr. Abu-Rishtah's interview reflected political thoughts and that his thoughts were based on personal interpretations of Islamic Shari'ah.

Presiding Judge Hafiz Amin rejected Mr. Lafi's assertions saying that "the case is within the court's jurisdiction because it involves slander against His Majesty King Husayn. Judge Amin also turned down a third request by Mr. Abu-Rishtah's attorneys to free their defendant on bail.

Mr. Abu-Rishtah, who has frequently been arrested over the past 10 years for militant activities, was apprehended by authorities on Oct. 15, nine days after he was interviewed by the Arab weekly AL- HIWAR in which he allegedly slandered the King.

The charge sheet said the suspect confessed to slandering the King when questioned by the authorities. "The King and his regime in Jordan are unjust and corrupt because they do not rule in accordance with God's teachings," the charge sheet quoted him as saying.

"My view of King Husayn is always the same. As long as he does not abide by God's teaching, he is unjust and corrupt."

At the end of the court session, the state prosecutor general asked Judge Amin to posptone the case because court witness 'Abdullah Muhammad Bani 'Issa, editor of AL-HIWAR newspaper failed to show up in court.

The judge set Dec. 12 for a new court session.

If convicted of slandering King Husayn, Mr. Abu-Rishtah could face up to three years' imprisonment.

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Buwayz Discusses Peace, Barcelona Conference

NC0912112695 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1015 GMT 9 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz has said that there is a current interest in pacifying the situation in the south, noting that the United States intervened to rein in the latest escalation in the situation in the south. Discussing the peace negotiations, Buwayz said that Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres wants to establish peace before the Israeli elections or during them. Yitzhaq Rabin's believed that peace could not be established before the elections. Buwayz said that Peres shows more vision and comprehensiveness in his view of peace. Buwayz stressed that if there is a real desire to achieve peace, it must take place according to one of two principles: Either accepting the June 1967 borders or agreeing to bring an end to the early warning systems.

Buwayz said that the Barcelona conference was a political process and put forward political principles and headlines along with an economic aspect. He noted that specialized or secondary conferences may be held to discuss the economic aspects. He said that the conference set forth principled orientations but there was no mechanism for application. He said that within months Lebanon will reach partnership agreements with Europe on customs, industry, agriculture, and trade.

In his interview with the Voice of Lebanon's "Saturday Salon" feature, Buwayz said that there is no such thing as perfect election law for all occasions, circumstances, and states. He added that maintaining governorates as constituencies will ensure more balance than smaller constituencies, because a deputy's stance will be national and overall and not factional or sectarian. He said that there is a trend to maintain governorates as election constituencies.

Replying to Minister Walid Junblatt's latest statement against President Ilyas al-Hirawi and the army, Buwayz said that these statements are absolutely unwarranted politically and election-wise. He stressed the need to give up the considerations and grudges of the war.

Prime Minister al-Hariri Comments on Peace

Says Country 'Ready for Peace'

NC0912132595 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1130 GMT 9 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri has reiterated that Lebanon will benefit from a just and comprehensive peace that liberates our territories from occupation. He said: We are ready but Israel has to decide to live peacefully in the region and not impose its hegemony on the Arab region. He added that the people of the region are ready for peace but the ball is in Israel's court. He went on to say: If a peace agreement is signed, it will then create new challenges for us. We are convinced that the people are capable of confronting these challenges.

Prime Minister al-Hariri was speaking at the opening of the Haj Baha'-al-Din al-Hariri School in Sidon today.

Stresses Stance on 'Just' Peace

NC1012152895 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1400 GMT 10 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri has reiterated Lebanon's stance that achieving a just and comprehensive peace is contingent on Israel's withdrawal from the occupied territories in Lebanon and Syria.

During a news conference at a cultural seminar in Sidon, Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri said that the Pan-Arab highway is linked to Lebanon's relationship with Arab countries. [passage omitted] The following is a recording of Prime Minister al-Hariri in Sidon:

[Begin al-Hariri recording] Undoubtedly, the Pan-Arab highway is linked to Lebanon's relationship with Arab countries. It also has another, regional significance. We aim to link Lebanon with Syria and the other Arab countries through a highway.

The situation with Israel is unchanged. The Israelis have been making statements since the new Peres-led government was formed. However, we have nothing to verify that the Israelis are serious on the peace issue. If they are serious then we too are serious. They must withdraw from the occupied Lebanese land as well as the occupied Syrian land. Such Israeli withdrawals will prove that they are indeed serious about achieving a just and comprehensive regional peace.

We have always said—and we emphasize—that if Israel wants to live in peace in the region, peace can be easily attained; but if it wants to control and impose its hegemony on the region, then peace will be very far away. There is not a Lebanese or a Syrian who would accept Israel's regional control and hegemony. Peace would be easily attained if Israel wanted to live in peace. This is our position. This, however, does not mean that we are not reconstructing or developing our country. We must endeavor to strengthen the resolve of the Lebanese people. [passage omitted] [end recording]

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Sixth Shipment of U.S. Weapons Arrives

NC0812121595 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1130 GMT 8 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Lebanon today received another shipment of U.S. weapons to strengthen the Lebanese Army, which is being reequipped.

A Defense Ministry source said the army received 107 M113 personnel carriers and 23 jeeps.

This is the sixth shipment of weapons received from the United States in the past 48 months.

The source said a new personnel carrier costs $1 million but Lebanon paid $50,000. The personnel carriers are overhauled and shipped from a U.S. military base in Weisbaden, Germany.

UNIFIL Protests Wounding of Norwegian Troops

TA1012090895 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0800 GMT 10 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Three Norwegian soldiers in UNIFIL, the UN Interim Force in Lebanon, were wounded last night by fire from an Israeli tank. One of the soldiers is in serious condition, while the two others were slightly hurt.

The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] is investigating the circumstances of the incident. Deputy UNIFIL Commander Timor Goksel told our correspondent Ilan Ro'e that at about 0100 Sunday a routine UNIFIL patrol passed near the village of Balat in the Marj 'Uyun area when fire was suddenly directed at it. The UNIFIL command protested to the IDF about the firing.

Cuban Deputy Prime Minister Begins Official Visit

NC0912142395 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1400 GMT 9 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cuban Deputy Prime Minister Pedro Miret Prieto arrived from Amman this afternoon on an official one week working visit to Lebanon.

He will hold talks with a number of senior Lebanese officials and economists. He will also sign an agreement to encourage investments between the two countries and hold talks on preparing an agreement to avoid double taxation.

Hizballah: No Security Guarantees for Israel

NC1112075195 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0630 GMT 11 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Hizballah Deputy Secretary General Shaykh Na'im Qasim has declared that the Islamic Resistance has given no security guarantees to the Zionist enemy. He called on those who periodically speak about giving guarantees to the occupation army to stop.

In a speech marking one week since the death of a Resistance leader, martyr Sa'id Harb in Jibshit, Qasim said that northern occupied Palestine will not be safe if Lebanese villages, men, women, and children are subjected to barbaric Zionist attacks. He noted that any bombardment of civilian targets will be avenged by shelling the northern Israeli settlements.

Qasim pointed out that things are different for the occupation army, because jihad operations will continue against it regardless, God willing.

Shaykh Qasim remarked that many spy rings working for the Zionist enemy have been dismantled, thus weakening the enemy's intelligence capabilities locally, thanks to the vigilant eyes of the Resistance fighters.

He emphasized that the assassination of martyr Harb was a cowardly act carried out in an unprotected place and remarked that it is nothing courageous for the enemy to place an explosive device under a car or behind a wall in a civilian area. If the enemy were courageous, Qasim said, he would confront the Resistance fighters, who are always ready for battle.

Israeli Demand for Early Warning Station Rejected

NC1112094995 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0900 GMT 11 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Defense Minister Muhsin Dallul has announced that Lebanon, like Syria, has rejected Israel's demand to set up an early warning station on Lebanese territory. He said the decision has been conveyed to Israel and the United States.

Minister Dallul added that this Lebanese position was adopted within the context of Syrian-Lebanese coordination and in line with the brotherhood, cooperation, and coordination treaty that has linked the two countries since 1991.

Israeli Overflights, Bombardment Noted

NC1012124895 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1130 GMT 10 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Israeli acts of aggression against the south continued today. The Israeli forces dropped flares over Wadi al-Saluqi, Shaqra, Haddatha, and Bra'shit in the central sector. Israeli helicopters and reconnaissance planes have not stopped their flights over the south since a Resistance operation left an Israeli paratroop colonel dead and seven men wounded, as the enemy radio admitted.

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At dawn today, Israeli artillery located in Tallusah fired rounds of various calibers at the outskirts of nearby villages to prevent the bodies of martyrs Hutayt and Qays from being removed.

The areas around the villages of Majdal Zun and Zibqin and nearby valleys in the western sector came under machine-gun fire from enemy positions in Tayr Harfa and al-Rujmayn. The Israeli naval blockade of the southern coast from al-Sarfand up to al-Naqurah continues.

In Western al-Biqa', Israeli helicopters flew over the contact line along the eastern and western sector at dawn today. The helicopters also flew over the Zummarayya and al-Ahmadiyah positions. A helicopter landed in Tallat al-Ahmadiyah for 10 minutes.

This morning the Israeli artillery in Abu Qamhah and Tallat al-Shurayqi fired about 30 155-mm rounds at the al-Jabbur, Abu Rashid, and Maydun areas in Western al-Biqa'. The Israeli forces later raked the Jabal al-Dahr hills and the vicinity of 'Ayn Fujur and Jabal al-Khulwat for 30 minutes.

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Israel's 'Frank' Commitment to Withdrawal Urged

JN0812162195 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1240 GMT 8 Dec 95

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Gentlemen: Pushing forward the peace process on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks is the focus of extensive political efforts witnessed in the region and by the international parties concerned. Everyone is firmly convinced that peace cannot be achieved without Syria and Lebanon; that the two sisterly countries are really eager to achieve a just and comprehensive peace in the entire Middle East; and that to achieve this peace there is no alternative to an Israeli stand that is tantamount to the level of the peace issue and that adheres to the facts and bases of peace.

In this regard, it was announced that Israel's prime minister, who is preparing to leave for Washington to meet with the president of the United States, intends to present an integrated plan to push forward the peace process on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks. Israel's prime minister expressed his belief in the importance of peace with Syria and Lebanon to achieve a comprehensive solution in the region.

Many statements have been made. However, peace will not be achieved through statements made in the past, the present, or the future. The building of peace requires translating statements into tangible deeds on the ground. Syria, for example, seeks to restore the occupied Golan and to achieve the withdrawal of Israeli forces from it to the 4 June 1967 lines. The Golan is a dear part of the homeland that was usurped in an illegal manner. The people of the Golan were displaced; they are eagerly waiting for a peace agreement so that they can return to their homeland, regain their property, and live a normal life.

Hence, it is natural for the Syrians to reject any solution that does not guarantee Israel's full withdrawal and the return of the Golan people. This is especially so since Syria openly announced its willingness to achieve a full peace. It is natural for the Syrians to be worried while watching Israel's games in Jerusalem and the West Bank where the occupation is being reinforced, the West Bank is being partitioned, and Arab cities are being surrounded by settlements. All these practices do not indicate any good intentions. Syria's persistent demand for clarity proceeds from this premise. Full peace should be in return for full withdrawal. Full withdrawal means the return of Israeli forces to the 4 June 1967 lines, full restoration of Syria's sovereignty over its territories, and the removal of all traces of occupation. In other words, Syria will not be deceived by misleading proposals, such as ground monitoring [muraqabah] stations and so forth, because it believes that this is a consecration of the occupation one way or another. Reaching even [muta'adilah] and equitable [mutakafi'ah] security arrangements is possible.

From this premise, pushing forward the peace process on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks requires that Israel withdraw its proposals, which conceal expansionist intentions. Syria rejected these proposals, which were the reason behind the halt to the negotiations. It is well known that Syria does not go back on its stands because these stands emanate from its belief and conviction. Moreover, Syria's stands are fully in line with UN resolutions.

Last week, the UN General Assembly denounced Israel's practices in the Golan and urged it to stop building settlements, to cancel its arbitrary laws, and to withdraw to the previous 1967 lines. Pushing forward the peace process requires Israel's frank commitment to a full withdrawal from the Golan and southern Lebanon. We believe the four years since the convocation of the Madrid conference is enough time for the Israelis to realize that Syria will never relinquish its sovereignty, territories, and rights.

Radio: Successful Talks Need 'Different' Israeli Position

JN0912084595 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0545 GMT 9 Dec 95

[Press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] Under the headline "The Honorable Peace," TISHRIN says: Everybody knows that since its establishment, Israel has pursued an expansionist policy. The settlements it built and the land it confiscated by force is the best proof of this. No one has seen any change in the official Israeli policy in terms of dismantling settlements and ending all settlement activities.

The paper notes that Israel has always used security allegations as a cover for this policy, and went as far as talking about preemptive wars. When it entered the discussions on the peace issue, it rejected the desired just and comprehensive peace. The Syrian-Israeli talks, held under U.S. auspices, came to a halt when Israel proposed unfair conditions that violate Syrian sovereignty.

TISHRIN stresses that successful negotiations with Syria and Lebanon require a different, and objective Israeli position that distances itself from the security allegations and the schemes of expansion and hegemony. The paper says: We believe that the four years which have passed since the Madrid conference are enough for

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the Israelis to understand very well that Syria does not relinquish its land or rights and does not bargain over the other Arab territory; and that equitable [mutakafi'] security on both sides of the 4 June 1967 is the only arrangement which it accepts. Syria has rejected, rejects, and will reject any discussion of ground stations and considers such a measure an attempt to entrench occupation. It is well known that peace and occupation do not meet.

TISHRIN concludes: Syria is serious about achieving a just peace. However, Syria will never accept anything that threatens its sovereignty and security. There is no alternative to Israel's complete withdrawal to beyond the 4 June 1967 lines and dismantling all traces of occupation from that territory.

In an editorial devoted to the peace process in the region, AL-THAWRAH touches on the statements made recently by Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres. The paper says: We do not see anything in Peres' repeated statements to make us optimistic. These statements were very contradictory.

The paper adds: Israel does not desire peace and is not serious about the search for peace. If Israel had responded favorably to the resolutions of international legitimacy, such a peace would have been achieved. Israel does not have the right to set conditions or specify things. Israel is now required to offer the requirements of peace.

The paper says; Syria has repeatedly said that all that is required is a complete withdrawal from the Golan Heights and southern Lebanon in exchange for complete and just peace. This argument is well known and constitutes the principle that determines the Syrian position, which was declared time and again by President Hafiz al-Asad and on every occasion.

The paper adds: The Israeli Government's excuses of time and elections do not concern Syria, nor do they constitute an element of pressure against it to make it relinquish some of its rights. The paper notes that elections are an Israeli affair and a domestic matter that do not concern Syria, except in the way they reflect positively on the just and comprehensive peace.

AL-THAWRAH concludes: Peres must prove in practice that he is serious about peace and must translate this seriousness in declared positions on the ground. He must also declare, unequivocally and unambiguously, that he is prepared to make a complete withdrawal from the Golan Heights and southern Lebanon. He will then see the Syrian response, which was stated time and again by President al-Asad; that peace will remain a strategic option. Israel must announce that peace is its option too, but it has not yet declared this.

Damascus 'Cautiously Optimistic' on Peres Proposals

JN0912150695 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 9 Dec 95

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Dear listeners: Observers of the peace process have voiced their optimism about the possibility of achieving tangible progress on the Syrian-Israeli track and the Lebanese-Israeli track. This optimism, whose details were circulated, is due to Syria's firm adherence to the peace process, to its response to U.S. efforts to push the process toward its desired goal, and to the new Israeli political and media reports showing that Israel understands the importance of peace with Syria, as well as the price Israel should pay for it, namely, a total withdrawal from the Golan, the removal of the obstacle of the early warning station on the ground, and speeding up efforts to achieve progress, which the Israeli prime minister says is more important to his government's policy than the upcoming elections.

Moreover, the United States is determined to exert more efforts to save the peace process from its crisis and overcome the state of dormancy from which it is suffering. This surfaced clearly during the recent tour of the region by Dennis Ross, U.S. coordinator of the peace process, and in Israeli media reports of an integrated plan Peres will carry to Washington to promote the peace process on the Syrian track in light of lessons derived from developments in the region. So, observers are waiting for the results of this visit to judge the future of the peace process. U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher will then tour the region to prepare for the next step in light of the facts and positions Peres' visit will produce.

Therefore, we are cautiously optimistic that Israel has realized that wasting time is not in the interest of peace and that removing the Israeli obstacles will activate the Syrian track, which has stopped as a result of Israel's impossible conditions set by the government of Yitzhaq Rabin by postponing talks on the Syrian track until after the upcoming Knesset elections.

Therefore, we are awaiting the proposals Shim'on Peres will carry to Washington, the results of his meeting with U.S. President Bill Clinton, and how the U.S. Administration will translate its pledge to intensify its efforts to save the peace process from its crisis and activate the Syrian track in accordance with the firm

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bases of the peace process and the principle of land for peace, which means a total withdrawal for total peace, as Syria has always announced, in addition to equitable [mutakafi'ah], equal [mutasawiyah], and parallel [mutawaziyah] security arrangements that are mutual commitments. True security is the same as peace, which constitutes the greatest guarantee for all parties.

Belief in peace requires an honest step toward it. Syria, which adherences to peace and is trying to achieve just and comprehensive peace, has repeatedly stressed its readiness to translate its position into a tangible reality based on a total withdrawal for total peace. While it asserts there is a true chance to achieve a tangible progress in the peace process, Syria hopes that the Israeli officials are honest in their intentions and are serious about making peace based on justice and respect for the international legitimacy, which will guarantee security, rights, and dignity for all parties.

Clinton-Peres Meeting, U.S. 'Commitments' Viewed

JN0912104895 Damascus SANA in Arabic 0830 GMT 9 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Damascus, 9 Dec (SANA) — AL-THAWRAH newspaper has expressed hope that the United States will adhere to its international commitments and obligations when U.S. President Bill Clinton meets with the Israeli prime minister in the next couple of days.

In an editorial today by its editor in chief 'Amid Khuli, the newspaper says: The United States is required to have Israel implement the U.S. land-for-peace initiative. Any other Israeli formula for the peace process is unacceptable, no matter under what pretexts or justifications. A major and strategic peace process should not be tied to elections or other domestic Israeli considerations.

The paper says the pretext of time and elections is of no interest to Syria. This pretext will not put pressure on Syria nor make it relinquish some of its rights. The elections are a domestic Israeli affair. Syria is only interested in how those elections would reflect positively on a just and comprehensive peace. The elections are an element of pressure on Israel and the Peres government.

AL-THAWRAH adds: Israel and Peres should respond to the peace process. This will be a helping factor for Peres and not an obstructing factor or an element of pressure. This will put pressure on others in the interest of Peres if he achieves peace.

The newspaper adds: Assuming that statements could be misread or misinterpreted, we must stress that Peres must prove his desire for peace in practice and on the ground. He must embody this desire in declared stands and on the ground. He must declare openly and unequivocally Israel's readiness to withdraw fully from the Golan and southern Lebanon. Once he does this, he will see the Syrian response, which is summed up in President al-Asad's repeated assertion that "peace is a strategic option and shall remain so".

AL-THAWRAH concludes: All Israel has to do is declare that peace is also its option. Israel has so far failed to do this.

Possible Outcome of Talks Viewed

JN1012083595 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0545 GMT 10 Dec 95

[Press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] AL-BA'TH comments on the visit of Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres to Washington. The paper points out that the peace process has experienced an unprecedented stalemate due to Israel's adherence to its intransigent stands and insistence on not complying with the principles and foundations of the peace process. These principles stipulate a full Israeli withdrawal from the Golan to the 4 June 1967 lines without leaving behind any symbol of the occupation, not even a one-man control post.

AL-BA'TH says Israel's adherence to this stand and its use of the cover of security arrangements led to a stalemate in the peace process. Based on its awareness of this fact, the world had continued to blame the Israeli Government until the last day in the life of Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin.

The newspaper discusses the new ideas put forth by Peres to activate the peace process and resume the talks on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks. The paper says: We, and all those who are really interested in achieving a just and comprehensive peace in this region, have the right to ask questions about the content and seriousness of these ideas. Certainly, no one can give a definite answer about the content of these ideas before they are made public. There are only two possibilities here. Either Peres is proposing ideas that are not different from previous ideas and this is definitely rejected, or he is planning to respond to international legitimacy and the requirements of the peace process by declaring full withdrawal from the Golan, southern Lebanon, and the rest of the occupied Arab territories. The second possibility is naturally acceptable because it is in line with the will of those who aspire for a just and comprehensive peace. This would pave the way for achieving the objectives of the peace process.

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In one of its commentaries, AL-THAWRAH says: It is clear that a just and comprehensive peace requires that Israel respond to the resolutions of the Security Council and commit itself to full withdrawal from southern Lebanon and the Golan. This is the real prelude to a just and comprehensive peace that achieves the rights of all parties, ensures the interests of all, and preserves dignity. If Israeli proposals achieve these objectives, then we can talk about an opportunity for real progress.

AL-THAWRAH adds: Real peace and progress cannot be achieved by words alone. Israel, therefore, is required to translate its words into deeds and prove the credibility of its new position on the peace process and its declared eagerness for progress on the Syrian track. Optimism remains cautious pending the outcome of the meeting between Peres and U.S. President Bill Clinton. If Peres proposes a complete plan that is in harmony with the Security Council resolutions and the formula of full peace for full withdrawal, then optimism will turn into reality and wishes will become concrete facts. This is because the only thing that is obstructing real progress is the deliberate Israeli evasion, because Israel was not contemplating full withdrawal and fulfilling the obligations of peace.

AL-THAWRAH concludes: Syria hopes for real progress in the peace process. Syria also hopes that Peres will submit proposals in Washington that can transform words into actions and remove obstacles and pretexts. Peace requires an honest and serious stand, decision, and action. In essence, peace must also be just. This cannot be achieved if occupation continues in any form or through any symbol. Peace also means stability, which cannot be achieved while aggression continues. Has Israel reached this conviction? Will Peres propose something that can achieve all of the above?

TISHRIN comments on Israel's attempts to cover up its aggression against Lebanon and its occupation of the south by using flimsy pretexts that are soon defeated by logic and reality.

The newspaper says that the Lebanese national resistance, which Israel claims to be behind the continuation of the occupation of the south, is pursuing a national policy and assuming the duty of resisting bombardment and aggression. The resistance has never been the reason for the escalation in Israeli provocations and in heating up the situation in the south. This is because the resistance is the effect, rather than the cause, of occupation. The occupation is the cause of all problems in Lebanon. Once the occupation ends, all problems in Lebanon and in the south will definitely end.

TISHRIN adds: While observing the scorched-earth policy against Lebanon through Israeli bombardment and the heavy weapons and troops in southern Lebanon, it is clear that the problem in Lebanon lies in the occupation, and nothing else. This is because Lebanon is independent and nothing threatens its independence and security other than the Israeli occupation of its territory and the flagrant intervention in its affairs.

The paper concludes: If Israel truly wants to address the problem of the south away from aggression, destruction, and bombardment, then it should not place the cart before the horse and not reshuffle the cards. The problem of the south and Lebanon is the occupation and nothing else.

Peres' Remarks on 'Price' for Syrian Peace Viewed

JN1012141295 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 10 Dec 95

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Gentlemen: Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres has said that he will soon announce in the Knesset what price Israel is prepared to pay for reaching peace with Syria. He said: The overwhelming majority of Israelis wants peace and knows what price must be paid in exchange for this.

The regrettable fact is that, until now, all Israeli leaders have evaded talk about peace requirements, foremost are full withdrawal from the Golan and return to the 4 June 1967 border. They raised their people on the right to expand into the territory of others and to seize it by force. Some of them even boasted that Israel's border is where an Israeli soldier stands. If it is time now, and even high time, to announce full compliance with the Security Council resolutions which call on Israel to fully withdraw, this announcement must be clear, frank, and without any ambiguity.

Regarding the Syrian-Israeli track, Syria adheres to its well-known stand, represented by restoring all the Golan, removing any trace of occupation in it, and enabling Syrian refugees to return to their homes and property. This requires the dismantling of settlements and the evacuation of settlers. Through its withdrawal from the Golan and compliance with the international legitimacy resolutions, Israel will not be paying any price. This is because the Golan has always been Syrian territory and an integral part of Syria's geography, history, civilization, and culture. Israel's full withdrawal means straightening out matters. In exchange for this, Israel will gain peace, which, as everybody knows, is the ideal guarantee for security and stability in the region.

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If the majority of the Israelis wants peace, as Peres said and as the assassination of Rabin revealed, it is time to translate intentions into tangible deeds. Nothing paves the way for an honorable and just peace other than a frank and public commitment to a full withdrawal from the Golan and adopting the principle of even [muta'adil] and equitable [mutakafi'] security arrangements.

Nobody should forget that Syria rejected and will reject any ground monitoring stations in the Golan, because it considers this a consecration of occupation, an encroachment on its sovereignty, and a threat to its security and that of its citizens.

Hence, any proposals that do not bypass the illegitimate Israeli demand and do not contain respect for sovereignty are doomed to failure and will only delay the peace process and complicate the situation, particularly since peace with Syria and Lebanon and guaranteeing the return of all occupied territory in the Golan and southern Lebanon are necessary so that the peace process will achieve its objective.

Radio: 'Positive Statements' Not Enough To Make Peace

JN1112084995 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0550 GMT 11 Dec 95

[Press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] Syria's position is clear, explicit, and objective, TISHRIN says in its editorial today. It adds: This position is fully in line with the relevant UN Security Council resolutions, the bases of the Madrid conference, and the essence of the U.S. land-for-peace initiative. Israel has no right to specify the extent of its withdrawal or to draw what it calls Syria's international border. The UN Security Council resolutions leave no room for ambiguity and call on Israel to withdraw its troops to the 4 June 1967 lines.

The paper discusses statements by Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres in which he said that Syria can greatly and tangibly contribute to the achievement of comprehensive peace. It says: If Syria is to greatly and effectively contribute to the peace process, then Israel must meet Syria's fair demand to fully return the Golan Heights. As universally acknowledged, Syria's contribution is essential, the paper notes.

TISHRIN says that everyone in Israel and elsewhere is fully aware that there will be no peace with Syria without full withdrawal from the Golan and the Israeli occupation troops moving back to the 4 June 1967 lines. Everybody also knows that Syria cannot accept Israeli ground stations on the Golan, for they legitimize the occupation, violate Syria's sovereignty, and threaten its security.

Concluding its editorial, TISHRIN says that Syria made it clear time and again that it is looking forward to an honorable, just, comprehensive, and genuine peace that ends the occupation and aggression. Syria also made it clear that maneuvers or bargains are unacceptable. Syria's rights are as bright as the sun, and cannot be dimmed by unfair Israeli demands covered by security pretexts.

In its editorial, AL-BA'TH says that following Dennis Ross' recent tour of the region, the Israeli side sent some signals indicating that the Shim'on Peres government is moving toward taking a more realistic and rational position on the Middle East peace process. Among other statements trying to indicate good intentions, Peres made statements, especially at the beginning of his visit to Washington, in which he said that he is resolved to the advance of the peace process on the Syrian, Lebanese track, and that he is willing to have a comprehensive, integrated peace. The paper says that good intentions and positive statements are not enough to achieve the just, comprehensive aspired by the peoples of the region. Peace should bring an end to all manifestations of occupation and aggression.

AL-BA'TH says: Therefore, the new Israeli stands with their ostensible good intentions will depend on whether they will be translated from words into deeds. As always, the ball is now in the Israeli court. This is because Israel is responsible for the deadlock in the peace process. Therefore, it is the party capable of ending the deadlock by changing its position and course and explicitly announcing that it will fully withdraw from the occupied territories to the 4 June 1967 lines without leaving behind any trace or manifestation of occupation and aggression. Only that can put the peace process back on its sound track and allow it to move toward its aspired objectives.

The paper indicates that events have proved that all Israel's maneuvers and efforts to ignore the principles of the peace process and circumvent its basic requirements can only lead to the destruction of that process, pushing the region once again into a cycle of chaos, tension, and wars.

Muslim Brotherhood Former Chief Pardoned, Returns

JN1112071495 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 0500 GMT 11 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] A special amnesty has been issued for 'Abd-al-Fattah Abu-Ghuddah, former secretary

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general of the Muslim Brotherhood in Syria. He recently returned to Damascus after over 13 years in exile. A presidential decree pardoning Abu-Ghuddah was issued after an appeal by him.

Sudanese Minister Arrives With Message for al-Asad

JN1012174695 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1615 GMT 10 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] 'Abd-al-Rahman Husayn, minister of the Sudanese presidency, arrived in Damascus this morning.

He was received on arrival at Damascus International Airport by Wahib Fadil, minister of presidential affairs.

The Sudanese minister said he is carrying a message from the Sudanese president 'Umar Hasan al-Bashir to President Hafiz al-Asad.

Ba'th Party Officials, Governors Hold Meeting

JN0812132295

[FBIS Editorial Report] Damascus AL-BA'TH in Arabic on 31 October and 1 & 2 November reports on the joint annual meeting of provincial Ba'th Party branch secretaries and governors which began in Damascus on 30 October under Dr. Sulayman Qaddah, assistant secretary of the party Regional Command.

According to the paper, the opening session was attended by Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam, Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi, party Regional Command members, the two deputy prime ministers for social and economic affairs, several ministers, the deputy heads of Regional Command bureaus, the chairman of the Party Control and Inspection Commission, the party branch secretaries, the governors, the presidents of universities, the presidents of popular and professional organizations and trade unions, the chairman of the Central Control and Inspection Commission, and the directors of the media institutions.

The paper says that in his opening speech, Dr. Qaddah conveyed President Hafiz al-Asad's "greetings, affection, and appreciation" to the participants, reviewed past achievements, and called for greater efforts "to achieve the aspirations of the masses and the aims of the nation." The paper adds that several party branch secretaries then reviewed their past activities, pointing out the "great development and continuous progress" in carrying out set plans in all fields and affirming "the deep struggle cohesion and solid national unity" behind the party secretary general, President Hafiz al-Asad. The paper continues that several governors also addressed the opening session, reviewing the economic and services plans which have been carried in all fields and pointing out the improvement that has taken place in the services which are being rendered to the citizens in their governorates.

AL-BA'TH says that when the secretaries and governors resumed their meeting in the evening, they reviewed progress in party activities and execution of development plans in the agricultural, industrial, educational, and services sectors, pointing out the achievements made and the problems faced and suggesting means of overcoming them in order to further promote development and thus contribute to society's progress and prosperity. The participants, the paper adds, affirmed their resolve to pool their efforts, increase their tempo of work, and maintain their cooperation and coordination with the various competent quarters in order to consolidate the process of development and reconstruction under the party secretary general, President Hafiz al-Asad.

AL-BA'TH reports that the annual meeting was addressed on the second day by Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim, who gave a general review of political events on the Arab and international levels and their repercussions on Arab affairs and interests, pointing out "the gravity of continued Arab divisions." The paper adds: "In his review, the comrade vice president also dealt with the peace process and the obstacles which Israel places before the application of the resolutions of international legitimacy and the inclinations of the international community. He also dealt with developments in the Palestinian arena and the Palestinian people's disappointment over the serious concessions which certain Palestinian leaders have made, thus giving Israel major gains at the expense of Palestinian rights and the central issue."

The paper continues: "Khaddam also explained the dangers of slipping into separate agreements, such as the Jordanian-Israeli agreement and the Amman economic summit, as well as the dangers of some Arabs rushing toward Israel while it still occupies the territory, usurps the rights, commits all kinds of aggressions against the Arabs, and implements the Israeli plan at the expense of the Arabs and their future. The comrade vice president referred to Syria's principled, firm stand on the peace process—a stand which enjoys the respect and appreciation of the entire Arab people. He also affirmed Syria's commitment to the peace process and its objective demands on the basis of international legitimacy and the resolutions of the UN Security Council, including Israel's full withdrawal to the 4 June 1967 border and also from the occupied Lebanese territory. Comrade Khaddam explained Syria's role in the current phase under the leadership of party secretary general, comrade Hafiz al-Asad, as well as its pivotal

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role on the Arab and regional levels; a role which enjoys appreciation and respect on the international and regional levels."

The paper says that the annual meeting was addressed on the third and final day by Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi, who spoke about the measures which are being taken to achieve continuous balanced and comprehensive development, saying: "It is indeed a source of pride, confidence, and optimism that the economic, social, and cultural edifice is rising in this country and that the efforts which have been exerted by the government, workers, producers, and all citizens for years have succeeded in tackling many problems and overcoming all obstacles." The paper adds that citing facts and figures, the prime minister then went on recounting Syria's many accomplishments in the various sectors, including agriculture, industry, and investment, attributing these successes to the "sound policy of economic pluralism charted by comrade struggler Hafiz al-Asad."

AL-BA'TH concludes that Dr. Qaddah wound up the annual meeting by calling on participants to continue the work of implementing set plans and tackling all shortcomings. He stressed that every party, popular, professional, and government organization must assume its full responsibility in enhancing the level of performance, increasing production, improving quality, and thus strengthening Syria's steadfastness and consolidating the domestic front and national unity behind the "wise and courageous leadership" of President Hafiz al-Asad.

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Afghanistan

Madera Office Closure Shows Pakistan 'Hostility'

LD0812184995 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 8 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The government of Pakistan is planning to regulate the activities of non-governmental organizations based in Pakistan which assist Afghanistan. Bakhtar reports that the Pakistan government has said it is carrying out an investigation into the activities of all the non-governmental organizations based in Pakistan. The Pakistan government has closed the office of Madera [French organization] which was assisting the Afghan refugees.

Concerning the expulsion of the above organization's employees, a spokesman for the Foreign Ministry of Pakistan said yesterday it is Pakistan's right to expel organizations without explanation.

There are in Pakistan 105 non-governmental relief organizations assisting Afghanistan. These organizations help various projects in Afghanistan without having any political activity. This action is taking place merely because of Pakistan's hostility toward the Muslim people of Afghanistan.

Kabul Accuses Pakistan of Interfering in Affairs

LD0912194295 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Pashto 1230 GMT 9 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Afghanistan, once again, has accused Pakistan of interfering in the internal affairs of Afghanistan.

According to a report by the news agency of the Islamic Republic of Iran in New York, the Afghan permanent representative to the United Nations, in a letter addressed to the chairman of the UN Security Council, states the following:

The Pakistani Government dispatches military aid to the Taleban group via the Kandahar airport.

Referring to the flights of Pakistan's C-130 type planes which have taken place without Afghanistan's consent, Rawan Farhadi, [Afghan representative at the United Nations], regarded this as Pakistan's open aggression and interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan. He asked the UN Security Council to hold an (?emergency) session to consider this issue.

Pakistan Opening of Jalalabad Embassy Denounced

LD1012174295 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 10 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Here is a statement by the Islamic State of Afghanistan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs:

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan has recently announced that it was going to open its country's embassy in the city of Jalalabad. It is also said that the building of Pakistan's consulate in Jalalabad will be used for this purpose and Pakistan's Ambassador, Qazi Humayum, [words indistinct] has arrived in Jalalabad.

Taking into account accepted international rules and norms, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic State of Afghanistan announces: If the purpose of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan in this act is the normalization of relations and the resumption of diplomatic activities between the two countries, there is no need nor is there any legal basis for Pakistan opening its embassy in the city of Jalalabad while it has a consulate there.

As it is customary in all countries and is formally practiced in international law, embassies are opened in the capitals of countries. If Pakistan's embassy shall resume work in a province instead of the capital, this will be against all accepted international relations norms. If Pakistan is inclined to resume its diplomatic activities in Afghanistan, the Islamic State of Afghanistan is ready to consider a suitable site and the government of Pakistan can use it until its embassy building is ready for utilization. As it pays attention to the security of other (?countries') embassies and diplomatic missions as well as the international organizations' offices, the Islamic State of Afghanistan is ready to pay attention to the security of Pakistan's embassy and its staff too.

'Very Intense' Battle Reported Near Kabul

BK0912090895 Hong Kong AFP in English 0901 GMT 9 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Rish Khvor, Afghanistan, Dec 9 (AFP) — Government troops and the Taleban militia traded heavy rocket, machine-gun, mortar and tank rounds during a 16-hour battle near Kabul early Saturday [9 December], commanders said.

Government jets also bombed Taleban positions on this frontline, just five kilometers (three miles) from Kabul's southern suburbs, during several raids on Saturday, the commanders and witnesses told AFP.

The fire fight began late Friday and continued through the night, culminating in the aerial bombing runs, but no

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ground was won or lost by either side, military sources said.

Commanders said the frontlines had not altered, adding that there were no immediate reports of casualties on either side.

"The battle was very intense, but it was routine in that it did not form part of any major offensive in this area," Major Ahmad Shah [name as received], a government frontline commander said from his post here.

Rish Khvor was deserted by its inhabitants as the fighting here intensified.

The battle was the heaviest in more than five days during which there was a lull in fighting near Kabul and in rocket and artillery attacks on the besieged capital.

The Taleban Islamic student militia have been dug in at Rish Khvor since October, when they were pushed out of Kabul's southern suburbs after their last attempt to seize the war-torn capital failed.

The turbaned militiamen are also encamped on two other major fronts around the city, where they are imposing a fuel blockade which has sent prices of petrol, kerosene, fire wood and diesel soaring as the freezing winter takes hold of Kabul.

The Taleban, who emerged from Koranic schools in Pakistan, have vowed to topple the beleaguered three-year-old administration of President Borhanoddin Rabbani and impose Islamic law on the whole country.

'Bhutto's Taleban' Fires Rockets at Kabul

LD0912171895 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 9 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Benazir Bhutto's Taleban fired today around noon [words indistinct] rockets on the residential areas of Kabul.

BAKHTAR reports that the sound of explosions was heard today at lunchtime when Benazir Bhutto's Taleban fired (?27) rockets. The landing of the rockets caused a number of residential houses (?to be destroyed) and a number of others to sustain damage.

These rockets were fired from the southern direction from the spot where the Taleban group have closed Kabul-Gardez supply road.

This afternoon, the Air Force's bombers bombarded the enemy's concentration points and fortifications in the south. No reports are yet available on the loss of life and material sustained by the Taleban mercenaries.

'Diplomatic Areas' Hit

LD0912220495 Tehran IRNA in English 2059 GMT 9 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kabul, Dec. 9, Irna — The Taleban militia has kept up its rocket attacks on the Afghan capital, and by mid-day Saturday [9 December] bombarded the central part of Kabul three times.

The Afghan Defence Ministry said the rockets struck the city centre and the diplomatic areas.

The source that although the Taleban attacks did not not cause casualties, they led to devastation of the central parts of Kabul.

Meanwhile, the government forces and the Talebans attacked each other's positions south of Kabul with heavy artillery and mortar fires. No report is yet available on the probable casualties.

The Talebans lobbed rockets and long-range artillery shells on Kabul from their positions in Chahar Asiab, (Rashkhor), Khayrabad and (Sangnebeshteh) south of Kabul.

Fire Ensues at Closed UK Embassy

LD1012142195 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Pashto 1230 GMT 10 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] A Taleban rocket hit the British Embassy building in Kabul. Reliable Afghan sources in Peshawar said that as a result of the landing of the rocket on 9 December, the embassy caught fire. The British Embassy in Kabul was closed after the former Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan.

Government Forces Bomb Taleban Positions

LD1012115195 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 10 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] As a result of bombardments on Taleban positions in Chahar Asiab [Afghanistan], 27 of the group's forces were killed and several were wounded.

An Afghan Defense Ministry source in an interview with a Central News Unit correspondent in Kabul stated that after receiving a report on the movement of a column of Taleban forces' tanks and personnel carriers from Qandahar to the Chahar Asiab area, government planes bombed Taleban forces in Chahar Asiab in several stages.

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Launch 'Massive Attack'

BK1112095195 Hong Kong AFP in English 0940 GMT 11 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Rish Khvor, Afghanistan, Dec 11 (AFP) — Afghan government troops launched a massive attack on the Taleban militia besieging Kabul, triggering a rocket barrage on the capital, army and defence officials said Monday [11 December].

Jets bombed Taleban positions late Sunday, while troops bombarded the militiamen with a hail of missiles, rockets and heavy artillery on this frontline just five kilometers (three miles) from Kabul's southern suburbs, commanders here said.

"We were forced to attack the enemy to put a halt to what we saw as abnormal movements of troops and vehicles," a defence ministry spokesman said.

"The battle was very fierce and lasted about five hours, but we suffered no casualties on our side," a frontline commander Major Ahmad Shah told AFP.

The defence ministry and unit commanders said the frontlines had not changed during the fight, although the defence ministry said the Taleban had abandoned several posts in the area after they came under heavy fire. The claim could not be immediately confirmed by independent sources.

While troops on both sides were battling it out, the Taleban launched a barrage of about 40 rockets on the war-ravaged capital late Sunday.

But defence and hospital sources said that all the warheads had landed in a non-residential area which houses the airport, causing no casualties.

The capital — which is hemmed in on three fronts by the Taleban who have vowed to topple President Borhanoddin Rabbani's government and impose Islamic law on the country — was meanwhile calm and cold Monday, apart from the sound of routine artillery skirmishes on its outskirts.

Bangladesh

Parties Reiterate Call for Government Resignation

BK0812164395 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in English 1600 GMT 8 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Awami League president, Sheikh Hasina, has said it is now the demand of all the parties and the whole nation that the general elections be held under a nonparty neutral caretaker government. The Awami League chief told this at a news conference held at the party's Dhanmandi office in the capital today. She reiterated her demand for the immediate resignation of the prime minister and said the prevailing crisis must be resolved by taking steps to hold elections to the Jatiya Sangsad under a nonpartisan neutral caretaker government.

Jatiya Party held a news conference in Dhaka today. Acting Chairman of the Party Mr. Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury again told the newsmen that there is still time to resolve the political crisis through accepting their demand for holding general elections under a neutral caretaker government.

Speakers at the Jamaat-i-Islami rally at the north gate of the Baitul Mukarram [mosque] today said there would be no solution to the present crisis unless the demand for neutral caretaker government was met by the government for ensuring free and fair elections.

'Free, Fair and Impartial' Elections Stressed

BK0912182095 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in English 0200 GMT 12 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Chief Election Commissioner Justice A.K.M. Sadeque has said the commission is determined to hold the elections in a free, fair, and impartial manner. In a special interview with DAINIK BANGLA published today, the chief election commissioner said he had already started enforcing constitutional powers for holding elections. He called upon all to cooperate with Election Commission for holding elections in a fair and impartial manner in the greater interest of the country and democracy.

Strike Called by Opposition; First Day Peaceful

BK0912161095 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in Bengali 1500 GMT 9 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The first day of the three-day strike called by some opposition parties passed peacefully except for some stray incidents. A large-scale violent incident occurred in Chittagong, where a group of unruly youths set fire to the Election Commission office. Official sources said the fire destroyed the identity cards of more than 66,000 voters and important files and reports.

In the capital, all kinds vehicular traffic was off the road, although some rickshaws plied the streets. Railway sources said that trains left the capital on schedule, but most of them — especially Chittagong-bound trains — could not reach their destinations. No trains left the Lalmanir Hat, Rajbari, or Syedpur Stations. Picketers disrupted rail traffic by uprooting tracks between Maynamati and Lalmai in Comilla and between Gauripur and Shamganj in Mymensingh. Picketers also disrupted train traffic by using an empty wagon to barricade the

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track near Nurundi Railway Station in Jamalpur. Sadar Ghat Launch Terminal sources said that vessels bound for various routes operated as usual. Air traffic sources said that all flights operated on schedule from Zia International Airport except for a domestic flight. Production at various units of BCIC [expansion unknown], Bangladesh Sugar and Food Industry Corporation, and Bangladesh Steel and Technology Corporation in Dhaka and other places of the country was normal.

Our correspondents in Chittagong, Rajshahi, and Khulna report that the strike was observed peacefully in those places.

Meanwhile, leaders of Bangladesh Ship Owners Association have expressed grave concern over the three-day strike all over the country. In a joint statement, they said that the stop in production in industries and work at the land and water ports has caused widespread losses.

'Sporadic Clashes' on Second Day

BK1012162195 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in Bengali 1500 GMT 10 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The second day of the three-day strike program called by some opposition parties passed peacefully today. In the capital, some sporadic clashes took place between supporters of the strike and those opposed to it. At least 12 people were injured in clashes in different parts of the city.

In Dhaka, there was no movement of vehicles but rickshaws plied the streets. In the morning, several hundred people were seen walking to their offices and later returning from their places of work. Railway sources said several inter-district trains left the Kamalapur Station in the morning, but these trains later became stranded at various points due to barricades on the railway tracks. No trains have left Sylhet Station in the past two days. Civil aviation sources say that six out of 12 domestic flights were canceled today. All international flights except one operated on schedule from the Zia International Airport. Sources at the Sadarghat launch terminal said the movement of launches was normal. Production in different units of the Chemical Industries Corporation and the Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation in Dhaka and other areas of the country was normal.

Strike supporters staged processions in different areas of the city. They also held separate rallies in front of the National Press Club.

Amnesty Offered to Holders of Illegal Arms

BK1012131195 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in Bengali 1200 GMT 10 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] With a view to ensuring peace and discipline in the country and holding free and impartial elections, possessors of illegal arms have been asked to deposit all illegal weapons and explosives at the nearest police station by the 20th of this month. A press notification issued by the Home Ministry in Dhaka today said no action will be taken against those possessing illegal arms if they surrender their weapons within the stipulated time. The notification adds that stern legal measures will be taken against those failing to surrender their weapons within the stipulated time.

Bomb Blasts Reported in Defiance of Weapons Ban

BK1112075595 Hong Kong AFP in English 0734 GMT 11 Dec 95

[By Nadeem Qadir]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] DHAKA, Dec 11 (AFP) — A new round of explosions echoed around Dhaka on Monday [11 December], just hours after the government ordered the surrender of huge stocks of illegal weapons in the runup to nationwide elections next month.

Loud bomb blasts marked the final day of a 72-hour general strike called by the opposition as part of its campaign to bring down Prime Minister Khaleda Zia.

The home ministry ordered those with "illegal arms and explosives" or components to surrender them by December 20 or face stern action.

A ministry statement said "huge quantities of illegal arms and explosives" were in circulation and the clampdown was necessary to maintain law and order and ensure safe polls on January 18.

But one home-made bomb exploded as strike supporters marched through the Motijheel business district chanting anti-government slogans, a witness said.

Several small bombs were also hurled late Sunday at the residence of senior opposition Awami League leader Muhammad Nasim.

There have been several attacks on the homes of government ministers in recent days, while guns have also been used in clashes between rival student groups, political factions and by criminal gangs.

The government weapons order came amidst reports that firearms and explosives have flooded Bangladesh. There are signs that they are being increasingly used for political violence.

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No independent figure for bomb casualties in from political violence was available, but the Banglabazar Patrika newspaper said 600 children had fallen victim to home-made bombs used in clashes.

Police sources said guns and the components for bombs were mainly smuggled in from India by "terrorist groups."

In the widely used bombs, costing around 1.25 dollars each, there is gunpowder, sometimes with nails added, which is sealed in a small tin can. On top of the deafening noise they can cause serious injury.

"The use of petrol bombs (in recent days) is an extremely dangerous development," police inspector Anwar Hossain was quoted by as saying by one newspaper.

Police, who regularly seize a wide variety of weapons, have highlighted that many people are injured making or carrying the bombs.

The Patrika newspaper said groups of unemployed and homeless youths, many drug addicts, were involved in the underground manufacture of bombs.

Gangsters are heavily involved in the weapons business. Hand guns and light machineguns can be be bought for between 5,000 taka and 10,000 taka (125 to 250 dollars), police sources said.

The streets of Dhaka were again largely deserted on Monday, except for thousands of police and paramilitary troops guarding the capital.

Markets, schools and offices were shut, but there were no immediate reports of serious violence that has marked previous strikes.

The opposition has called a series of strikes as part of its 20- month old campaign to topple the prime minister and get elections under a neutral caretaker government.

The Awami League-led opposition resigned from parliament a year ago saying fair polls under Zia were impossible.

Zia, continuing as interim prime minister, has rejected the opposition demands as "unconstitutional." She dissolved parliament last month and called new elections for January 18.

The opposition was likely to calls fresh protests next week unless a settlement with the government is reached.

India

Army: Al-Faran 'Presumably Abandoned' Hostages

BK0912121595 Hong Kong AFP in English 1212 GMT 9 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Srinagar, India, Dec 9 (AFP) — The Indian army on Saturday [9 December] said the four Western hostages of a hardline Muslim guerrilla group may have been abandoned by their captors somewhere in the higher ranges of Himalayan Kashmir.

The army in a press release attributed the information to "confessions" extracted from three "foreign mercenaries" arrested during a firefight on December 4, which also left a top leader of the shadowy Al-Faran group dead.

"An interrogation of the three mercenaries has revealed the Al-Faran has presumably abandoned the foreign hostages somewhere in the high ranges of south Kashmir, and may have handed them over to some local militant group," it said.

The Al-Faran has been holding Britons Paul Wells, 23, and Keith Mangan, 33, American Donald Hutchings, 42, and German Dirk Hassert, 26 for more than five months after abducting them from the Kashmir resort of Pahalgam.

The hardline separatist group beheaded a fifth hostage, 27-year-old Norwegian Hans-Christian Ostro, in August.

The group, which India says is a splinter of the Harkatul Ansar separatist group comprising Afghan fighters, is demanding the release of 15 of their jailed comrades in a swap for the siezed Westerners.

New Delhi, which has had no contact with the Al-Faran since November 26, has rejected the demand as unacceptable saying it could set a precedent in Kashmir.

The army in its press release on Saturday identified the Al-Faran leader killed in the encounter in southern Anantnag district as Abdul Hamid and said he was also linked to the abduction of the four tourists.

"The army has also recovered a large amount of cash, documents and partially damaged cameras," from the site of the December 4 gunbattle with the Al-Faran militants, the statement added.

The three mercenaries also confessed to have been part of a militant group involved in the May 11 burning down of the centuries-old Charar Sharif Muslim shrine in Kashmir, the statement said. [passage omitted]

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Villagers Reportedly Sight Hostages

BK1112063495 Hong Kong AFP in English 0611 GMT 11 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] SRINAGAR, India, Dec 11 (AFP) — Four Western tourists kidnapped by Muslim separatists more than five months ago have been sighted by villagers in southern Kashmir and are apparently in good health, sources said Monday [11 December].

The sources, who requested anonymity, said the captives had been seen on Sunday in a village near the resort of Achabal, some 80 kilometers (50 miles) south of this Kashmir summer capital.

"All of the four were visibly healthy," one source said. "They were wearing heavy Kashmiri woolens and had beards.

"They looked as though they had adjusted themselves to the surroundings."

Al-Faran, the Muslim separatist group which kidnapped the two Britons, American and German in early July, has claimed previously that two of the hostages were seriously ill.

The sources said the hostages were guarded by several dozen heavily armed guerrillas at all times.

The sighting came a day after the Indian army said the hostages may have been "abandoned" in the Kashmiri Himalayas or turned over by Al-Faran to another militant group.

The army attributed the information to "confessions" extracted from three "foreign mercenaries" arrested during a firefight on December 4 which left a top leader of Al-Faran dead.

"An interrogation of the three mercenaries has revealed that Al- Faran has presumably abandoned the foreign hostages somewhere in the high ranges of south Kashmir, and may have handed them over to some local militant group," it said.

Britons Paul Wells, 23, and Keith Mangan, 33, American Donald Hutchings, 42, and German Dirk Hassert, 26, were abducted by Al- Faran near the Kashmir resort of Pahalgam while on separate trekking vacations.

The hardline separatist group beheaded a fifth hostage, 27-year- old Norwegian Hans-Christian Ostro, in August.

The group, which India claims is a splinter faction of the Harkat-ul-Ansar separatist group comprising Afghan fighters, is demanding the release of 15 of their jailed comrades in a swap for the Western tourists.

The Indian government, which has not had any contact with Al- Faran since November 26, has rejected the demand and ruled out a commando-style rescue operation as too risky.

More than 12,000 people have died in Kashmir, India's only Muslim-majority state, since 1989 when separatist groups stepped up the anti-Indian rebellion in the Kashmir Valley.

Army Denies Hostages in Custody

BK1112131895 Hong Kong AFP in English 1222 GMT 11 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Srinagar, India, Dec 11 (AFP) — A Muslim separatist group which kidnapped four Western tourists in Kashmir alleged Monday [11 December] that the hostages were in the hands of the Indian army, but the government denied the claim.

"The hostages are not in the hands of the security forces," a Kashmir government spokesman said in the Indian capital New Delhi.

Al-Faran, which abducted the two Britons, American and German in July, said in a statement released here that three of the captives had been "arrested" by the army after a December 4 firefight and that the other hostage was "missing."

The group said that its "chief commander," Abdul Hamid, alias Turki, had been killed in the December 4 clash with army troops near the Kashmir town of Anantnag.

It said Abdul Hamid and four other militants had "attained martyrdom" and that 19 Indian soldiers had been killed and 30 wounded in the gunbattle.

The Kashmir government spokesman said Abdul Hamid and four other militants had indeed been killed in a December 4 clash with the military but dismissed the group's other assertions.

"The hostages were not involved at all and were not anywhere near" where the clash took place, he said. "As far as we know they were far from that place."

The government spokesman acknowledged that the army had suffered "some casualties" but stressed that they were nowhere near as high as claimed by Al-Faran.

A government source in this Kashmir summer capital dismissed Al-Faran's claims as a "pressure tactic" and said the authorities believed the four hostages were still in the hands of Al-Faran.

The Al-Faran statement came a day after a reported sighting of the captives by villagers in southern Kashmir. [passage omitted]

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Leader of 'Militant' Al-Faran Group Killed

BK0912124295 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 9 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In Jammu and Kashmir, the leader of a militant outfit, Al-Faran group, holding four foreign tourists as hostages has been killed in a fierce encounter with the Rashtriya Rifles in Dabrun village of Anantnag District. A defense spokesman said in Srinagar this afternoon that four other mercenaries were also killed in the encounter and three arrested. Four others managed to escape. During interrogation, the arrested militants confessed that they were responsible for setting ablaze the shrine in Charar Sharif in May this year.

National Conference Head Attacked by Youth

BK1012081995 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 10 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The National Conference president, Dr. Farooq Abdullah, yesterday received minor injuries in his face when he was allegedly attacked by a youth in Rajaori, 177 km from Jammu. According to an official spokesman, Dr. Farooq Abdullah was attacked during a meeting with a deputation of youths. The security personnel overpowered the youth and handed him over to the police.

'Moslem Militants' Wound Kashmiri Journalist

BK0812163495 Hong Kong AFP in English 1530 GMT 8 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Srinagar, India, Dec 8 (AFP) — A senior Kashmiri journalist was shot and wounded by Moslem militants Friday [8 December] on the outskirts of this Kashmir summer capital, police said.

Zafar Mehraj, 40, who works for Zee Television and The Muslim newspaper of Pakistan, was abducted by members of an unidentified militant group in the Shaltang neighbourhood of Srinagar and shot in the abdomen, the police said.

Mehraj managed to reach Srinagar's main hospital and underwent surgery, doctors said and described his condition as stable.

Zafar and two colleagues were seized by the gunmen while returning from an interview with leaders of a renegade militant group, the Ikhwan-ul-Muslimoon. The other two journalists were not harmed.

The Indian government, which directly administers Kashmir, condemned the attack as an act of cowardice and said it has launched a hunt for the attackers.

"Moslem militants, who are finding it difficult to cope with the increasing public resistance, have now diverted their anger towards media people," a Kashmir administration spokesman said.

Kashmir's small press corps walks a tightrope between Indian troops and separatist groups seeking an end to Indian rule over the province, India's only Moslem-majority state.

Half-a-dozen journalists have died covering the conflict. AFP's Srinagar photographer Mushtaq Ali was killed and two other journalists injured in a parcel bomb blast in September.

The Moslem separatist drive in the state claimed by both India and Pakistan has left more than 12,000 people dead since 1989.

Iran

Jordanian Diplomat in Tehran Reportedly Expelled

LD0912201895 Tehran IRNA in English 2002 GMT 9 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Dec. 9, IRNA — Jordanian diplomat in Tehran Ahmad Faysal al-Sabagh has been reportedly declared persona non-grata for activities considered to have been inconsistent with the nature of his diplomatic office.

The Jordanian diplomat has been given a week's time to leave the Iranian soil.

Certain international news agencies, in the meanwhile, have reported that Jordan, too, will be deporting an Iranian diplomat in Amman.

Navy Chief: Ready for '80-Year War' for Islands

NC1012102695 Paris AFP in English 0941 GMT 10 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Dec 10 (AFP)—Iran is ready to fight an "80-year war" to defend three disputed islands in the Gulf, the deputy commander of the navy said in an interview published Sunday [10 December].

Rear admiral 'Abbas Mohtaj [spelling as received] told the weekly KEYHAN-E HAVA'I that Iran, "which fought eight years against Iraq to defend 100 metres (yards)" along their border, was "ready for an 80- year war to defend its islands in the Gulf."

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) also claims the three strategic islands of Abu Musa, Greater Tunb and Lesser Tunb, which Iran took over in 1971 before the UAE was founded.

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The dispute is a source of tension between Iran and the Gulf Arab monarchies, which back the UAE's claim.

"We want to maintain the status quo. It is in the interest of all the countries in the region, including the UAE," Mohtaj said.

"If historic claims are going to be put in the region, then Iran will have a lot to say."

But he added Iran was under no military threat in the Gulf.

"The Iraqi threat has been eliminated for the moment. Our southern neighbours are small and weak and cannot be considered as a threat," he said.

"The only potential threat is an external one: the presence of foreign forces in the Gulf where there are about 50 foreign warships, mostly American.

"But the Americans have no reason to attack us. They don't want a war against us, and neither do we," he said, ruling out any conflict in the coming years.

Nevertheless he said Iran would receive its third conventional submarine bought from Russia early next year.

The Islamic republic wants to beef up its presence in the Gulf of Oman and the Indian ocean, Mohtaj said, and is building a naval base in Shahbahar [spelling as received] on the Gulf of Oman to that end.

GCC 'Posturing' on Gulf Islands Issue Derided

LD0812220795 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1530 GMT 8 Dec 95

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Following the release of the final statement of the 16th summit of the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council [PGCC: Gulf Cooperation Council, GCC] in Muscat and support for the so-called ownership right of the UAE over three Iranian islands, the spokesman for the Islamic Republic of Iran's Foreign Ministry described the statement as unrealistic and a cause for discord. Dr. Mahmud Mohammadi, the spokesman for the Iranian Foreign Ministry, saying this, added: Iran regret's that Tehran's good intentions for resumption of ties in Doha has been ignored. He added: The Islamic Republic of Iran believes that statement of this kind only created discord and does not solve any problem not boost any cooperation in the region. The statement is contrary to stability, which is based on good neighborly ties, as is in line with aliens' interests. Dr Mohammadi then added: Islamic Republic of Iran was hoping that Arabs' Cooperation Council abstains from further deepening the differences between Iran and the UAE and back-up continuation of talks. Iran also expected that instead of the inappropriate term "occupation" some other word would be used for the islands, ownership of which is undeniable by the Islamic Republic of Iran and that the Quds [Jerusalem] occupying regime would be reproached. Using the term occupation for the Islamic Republic of Iran is aimed at nothing but diverting the public attention in Muslim countries from the occupation of the holy land of Palestine as well as paving the grounds for the compromise with the Zionist regime.

Dr. Mohammadi then pointed out: Islamic Republic of Iran believes that the next round of talks between the experts delegations of the two sides in Qatar, which was the beginning for high-level talks between Iran and the UAE shows the friends and the enemies of stability and security of the region. Only the enemies of friendly ties and cooperation among the countries of the Persian Gulf are weakening the continuation of peaceful dialogues between Iran and UAE.

The spokesman for the Islamic Republic of Iran's Foreign Ministry at the end said: Islamic Iran, being aware of enemies' intentions and to preserve the unity and solidarity among regional Muslim countries and based on Shaykh Zayid Bin-Sultan Al Nuhayyan's letter to President Rafsanjani in April 1992, has always reiterated readiness to negotiate with the UAE. Islamic Republic of Iran hopes that instead of statement that deepens differences and wage propaganda war and misconception about the intentions of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Arab states of the Persian Gulf support continuation of bilateral talks which is a reasonable and logical way.

As the Foreign Ministry of Iran has always stressed, posturing such as that announced at the end of the PGCC summit over three Iranian islands is repeating baseless claims by the UAE and brings nothing but disunity among the Muslims, especially when the wrong stance of the PGCC is announced at the time when attention of Muslims is paid more than anything else on Palestine and plots of the Zionist regime in the Middle East. Islamic Republic of Iran believes that repeating baseless claims over the three Iranian islands does not make any change in the ownership of the islands but direct talks have always been supported by Iran.

Islamic Republic of Iran has always called on the UAE not to resort to hue and cry that would only make the issue more complicated but prove goodwill by choosing talks that would remove the differences.

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Minister Va'ezi Urges Cooperation on Caspian

LD1112100695 Tehran IRNA in English 0730 GMT 11 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Dec. 11, IRNA — The deputy foreign minister for Euro-American affairs, Mahmud Va'ezi, stressed here Sunday [10 December] that the Caspian Sea is a part of the national heritage of all the littoral states and should be an element of unity and cooperation among them.

Addressing the conference on oil and gas prospects in the Caspian region, he underlined that this sea should not be turned into a scene of competition and tension among the big powers.

Promising economic posperity along with security and peaceful co- existence among the littoral states, Va'ezi reiterated that the Caspian Sea should be the source of cooperation, peace, stability and friendship.

He stressed that priority has been given to the exploitation of oil and gas resources in the sea but emphasized the importance of preserving the Caspian environment.

Commenting on the potentials that exist for the littoral states to develop the sea's resources, he voiced Iran's readiness to transfer its technology and capabilities to the other coastal countries.

On the importance of the safe transit of the sea's energy resources, Va'ezi stated that the transfer of the regional oil and gas to international markets via the Islamic Republic offers the best and most economical route.

He expressed hope that steps would be taken by the littoral countries to energize the newly-established organization of Caspian Sea littoral states that was formed on the suggestion of President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani.

Plane Makes Emergency Landing With Bomb Threat

LD1012083695 Tehran IRNA in English 0727 GMT 10 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Dec 10 (IRNA) — A Bahraini passenger plane, threatened to have been planted with a bomb, landed at Tehran's Mehrabad International Airport a few minutes ago following an urgent request from the pilot.

The passenger plane that made an emergency landing at Tehran's Mehrabad International Airport on Sunday [10 December] morning upon the request of its pilot, belongs to the Emirates Airlines.

The Airbus 300 carrying 180 passengers and crew, made the request to land after receiving threats that a bomb had been planted in the aircraft.

The plane was flying the Dubai-Zurich route.

Soon after the landing, security forces were stationed at the airport.

The plane landed at Mehrabad at 1040 hours, Tehran time, (0710 GMT) today.

Unconfirmed earlier reports said the plane belonged to the Bahraini Airlines.

Security forces have searched the passenger plane belonging to the Emirates Airlines that made an emergency landing at Tehran's Mehrabad International Airport this morning.

Nothing suspicious was found however, a reliable source at the Civil Aviation Organization (CAO) told IRNA but security personnel are now double checking the plane.

An airbus 300 with 180 passengers and crew on board made an emergency landing at Mehrabad on Sunday morning following a request by its pilot after threats were received that a bomb was allegedly planted in the aircraft.

The source further said that all the passengers and crew are safe and sound and they have been received by airport officials.

It was also reported that the Tehran-based representative of the Emirates Airlines is currently at the airport and talking with the passengers.

The official representative of the Emirates Airlines said the passenger plane that made an emergency landing at Mehrabad Airport will leave Tehran for its destination within half an hour.

The plane was flying the Dubai-Zurich route.

Zeidi Abdullah Tawakul told IRNA at the airport that the pilot of the aircraft made a request for an emergency landing when a sack was found on board which belonged to none of the passengers.

He added that the officials at Mehrabad Airport permitted the plane to make the landing and security forces searched the aircraft as well as the sack.

Since nothing suspicious was found and there was no sign of sabotage or bombing, the plane was permitted to leave the airport within half an hour, he said.

He added that the passengers were well received by the Iranian officials at the airport for one and a half hours.

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The passenger plane belonging to the Emirates Airlines that made an emergency landing at Tehran's Mehrabad International Airport this morning was delivered to the flight crew at 1330 hours Tehran time (1000 hours GMT) after being thoroughly searched by Iranian officials.

The pilot of the aircraft made a request for an emergency landing being suspicious that a bomb had been planted in the plane.

The crew and pilot of the plane left the transit corridor for the aircraft parked in the western end of the airport.

The plane is being refueled and the passengers are embarking aboard.

The UAE Airbus-300 airliner which had made an emergency landing at Tehran Airport at 1040 local time today took off from the airport at 1510 safely.

The plane with its 180 passengers and the crew on board was flying to Zurich from Dubai when the pilot requested permission to land at the Tehran Airport for fear that a bomb might have been planted at the aircraft.

Head of the UAE airline office, Abdullah Tawakul said that the pilot of the plane had demanded emergency landing at Tehran Airport after finding a suspecious bag inside the plane and that "there has been no bomb threat call."

He said after the security forces at the Tehran Airport found no suspicious thing, the pilot asked for permission to fly after refeuling and the plane took off.

The pilot thanked Iranian officials for their hospitality towards him and other passengers of the plane.

Tawakkul said the passengers aboard the plane were of British, French, Swedish, Indian and Arab nationals.

The health conditions of all passengers and crew members on board the plane were reported good by a medical team based at the airport before the plane took off.

Plane From UAE Lands After Alert

NC1012084795 Paris AFP in English
0829 GMT 10 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Dec 10 (AFP)—A plane from the United Arab Emirates carrying 180 passengers and crew landed here Sunday [10 December] following a bomb alert, a civil aviation authority official said.

The Emirates airline plane was en route from Dubai to Zurich when crew members found a "suspicious object" on board and asked to make an emergency landing in Tehran-Mehrabad airport, he told AFP.

The passengers disembarked without any problems and security services searched the plane.

Earlier the official agency IRNA had said the plane had come from Bahrain.

Plane Leaves After Search

JN1012152795 Manama WAKH in Arabic
1455 GMT 10 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Dubayy, 10 Dec (WAKH)—The Emirates Air Lines has said that one of its planes, which was flying between Dubayy and Manchester today, has taken off from Tehran International Airport after having been thoroughly searched by security officials to make sure that there was no bomb on board.

The EMIRATES NEWS AGENCY cited the Emirates Airlines as saying in a statement issued this afternoon that it received a report that there was a bomb aboard the plane, that the plane landed at Tehran International Airport, and that it was searched by security officials who did not find any bomb.

The plane resumed its flight to Manchester at 1430 Iran local time.

Va'ezi Discusses Tajikistan With Russian Envoy

LD0912213395 Tehran IRNA in English
2054 GMT 9 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Dec. 9, IRNA — Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister for Euro-American Affairs Mahmud Va'ezi in his meeting with Russian Ambassador to Tehran Tretyakov here Saturday [9 December] deplored the current developments that have halted the fifth round of peace talks between rival groups in Tajikistan.

The Iranian official said the opposing groups in Tajikistan would have to abide by the commitments previously entered into between them which, he said, was a principal element for attaining peace in that country.

The Russian ambassador agreed with the outlooks of the Iranian Foreign Ministry official and added that Moscow and Tehran would do well to cooperate for returning peace and stability to Tajikistan.

He said his government opposed anything that might jeopardize the talks.

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Commentary on Dispatch of U.S. Troops to Bosnia

LD0912141395 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1130 GMT 9 Dec 95

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The issue of the dispatch of 20,000 American troops to Bosnia has been once again faced with the opposition of the U.S. Congress. According to REUTERS 18 [figure as heard] U.S. Congressmen called on the U.S. President Bill Clinton, on 7 December, to stop dispatching the U.S. peacekeeping forces to Bosnia. These oppositions in the U.S. Congress come under circumstances when a number of the U.S. forces have arrived in Bosnia and the political negotiations for the fulfillment of the date and peace agreement have been expedited. Therefore the opposition by 180 [as heard] U.S. Congressmen from the point of view of the Western political circles, especially in the United States, is of great sensitivity.

According to political observers, the opposition of part of the U.S. Congress has roots in the party rivalries between the U.S. Republicans and Democrats inside the United States. Such oppositions are usually in the U.S. Congress. Last year, when the question of the dispatch of the U.S. forces abroad and their participation in the peacekeeping operations was brought up in the Congress a bill was ratified according to which Washington can participate in the overseas peacekeeping operations only if the American commanders command these operations, an issue which has somehow turned a tension between Russia and France to a lesser extent and the United States. And finally Moscow agreed to leave the direct command of the operations to the United States.

The other serious opposition of the Congress to the dispatch of the American forces to Bosnia included the expenses and the number of the U.S. troops to be dispatched to Bosnia. In this connection Clinton has threatened that he will use a special presidential sortie [as heard] to provide for the expenses of the American troops in Bosnia and in this manner he has justified the large number of the U.S. forces under the excuse of certain U.S. interests in the Balkans.

And today, once again, part of the U.S. Congressmen have announced their opposition to the dispatch of the U.S. forces to Bosnia. In fact such an opposition is a sign of dissatisfaction of a major portion of the U.S. public opinion to the dispatch of their children to Bosnia. Most of the American people are dissatisfied over the dispatch of their children to Bosnian. They are indeed concerned over the lives of their children.

According to political analysts the opposition members of the Congress, who are Republicans, opposed the new U.S. budget bill, something which led to the serious defeat of the Democrats and this time the Republicans intend to express opposition to the dispatch of the U.S. forces to Bosnia and in this manner inflict a new shock on Clinton's Democrat administration. Therefore it seems that the electoral rivalry between parties in the United States is the main reason for such an opposition and it seems unlikely that such oppositions may prevent the dispatch of the U.S. troops to Bosnia.

Radio Discusses U.S. Interest in Bosnian Peace

LD1012152195 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1100 GMT 10 Dec 95

[Unattributed commentary: "What Does the United States Want in Bosnia?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Richard Holbrooke, the U.S. envoy for the former Yugoslavia, arrived in the region to coordinate the new peace initiative for Bosnia and met and conferred with Bosnian, Serb, and Croatian leaders. By undertaking shuttle diplomacy in the region, Holbrooke is apparently trying to pave the way for a lasting peace, the final agreement for which is soon to be signed in Paris. In the past few days the involved sides have described their stances, which has shown how difficult it is to achieve peace.

The Muslim Bosnian government demands full control over Sarajevo and the areas that connect the capital to the north of the country. The Bosnian Serb leaders, meanwhile, have insisted many times that the Serb-inhabited area in the west of Sarajevo cannot be restored to the Bosnian governme[illegible]

Holbrooke is trying to implement the general framework of the Dayton peace accord on the control of the city by offering new proposals on the areas under occupation by the Serbs in Sarajevo. In his meetings with Croatian officials, Holbrooke has discussed the final signing of the Bosnian peace treaty and the implementation of the agreement concerning the incorporation of Eastern Slovenia in the Croatian state structure, as well as the strengthening of the Bosnian federation. According to the Dayton peace accord, Eastern Slovenia, which at the moment is occupied by Croatian Serbs, will be managed by the international community under the supervision of the transitional establishment for one year. After that it will join the Croatian government structure.

During the transitional period, the Croatian government will allow international observers to go to the borders of Eastern Slovenia; that is, Croatian borders with

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Serbia, Montenegro, and Hungary, and supervise the free movement of people and goods in those areas. The transitional establishment will also allow all refugees to return to their homeland.

Holbrooke's visit to the region is assessed as being mainly a continuation of the U.S. peace efforts in the Dayton session. The thing, more than anything else, that constitutes this managing activity is the efforts of the U.S. mediator to convince the Bosnian government to give necessary security guarantees for the presence of NATO troops in the region. On that basis, Holbrooke, during his meeting yesterday with Bosnian President Izetbegovic, called on him to agree to the dismissal of all foreign Islamic groups that have supported that country's Muslims in three years of war.

Washington, after an artificial isolation period, resorted to the double track plan in the region; that is, all-around participation in political and military issues to seize the initiative in the face of the Europeans to establish a cease-fire and for the peace process. It now seeks to dilute the role of Islamic states in the material and spiritual support of Bosnian Muslims.

Western observers, especially U.S. officials, are fearful that the presence of Islamic states in the arena of Bosnian developments may more than ever result in the strengthening of a foothold for Islamic groups in that country. Islamic groups in the form of charitable and humanitarian organizations are active in Bosnia. Western governments strongly suspect these groups because they are concerned these groups may effectively promote the objectives and strengthen the position of Bosnian Muslims by establishing satisfactory and constructive relations through similar organizations. This is something that has been assessed as contrary to the interests and viewpoints of Western leaders in the development of the region.

Radio Discusses International Conference on Bosnia

LD1012155795 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1130 GMT 10 Dec 95

[Unattributed commentary: "West Obliged To Press Serbs To Settle Bosnian Crisis"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The international conference on the implementation of Bosnian peace plan in London has come to an end after two days of talks. In the final statement of the conference the issues of return of the refugees and their settlement, the holding of free elections, and economic reconstruction have been touched upon. Political analysts have different opinions over the increase in the diplomatic efforts of Western politicians, especially those of Europe. Some believe that Europe will probably attempt to help reconstruction of Bosnia and on the whole settle the Bosnian crisis and in this manner prevent the probable future security threats which may reemerge in that region of the world. During the course of history the Balkans has been the channel through which the crises have entered Europe and this field has been increased today with the historical rivalry between the United States and Russia and the revival of Islamism there in that region. Therefore, Europe intends to bring the situation in the Balkans, especially in Bosnia, under control and in this manner reduce the destructive consequences of Europe's security crises — something which has always as a problem to Europe's economic, military, and political unity — bringing further influence of the United States and Russia in the Balkans.

Alongside this issue, some experts hold that Europe takes into consideration its economic and cultural influence in the Balkans. Therefore, Europe's economic and political circles wish to actively participate in the reconstruction and investment in the Balkans, especially in Bosnia. This analysis becomes practical when it is said that the rivalry among the Western states aimed at creating obstacles in the way of the Islamic states' political, cultural, and economic influence in the European communities and the Balkans, which enjoy an appropriate ground for such influence. In this regard reference can be made to the very fact that the major Islamic states have not been invited to participate in the London conference.

Regardless of the said issues the situation of the war-stricken countries becomes even worse in the war time and the governments have to deal with the ruins of the crisis. Such field is a favorite ground for the growth or continuation of crises in the Balkans. Therefore, with the assumption that in order to preserve Bosnia in the long run it should start from such a stage, Europe places the issues of the reconstruction of Bosnia at the top of its regional plans.

At any rate, regardless of any objectives the West pursues in holding such conferences, it seems that the Serbs' obstructionism in the fulfilment of the Dayton agreement will push the Europeans off the game and in order to win its objectives in Bosnia, the West is left with no option but to pressurize the Serbs.

Human Rights Seen as 'Weapon' in Western Hands

LD1012131995 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1100 GMT 10 Dec 95

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] It is the anniversary of the proclamation of the International Human Rights Decla-

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ration, the issue of ways of drawing up and implementing mandatory human rights regulations in various countries continues. Despite the passing of 48 years from the declaration of human rights and the signing of various conventions in this regard, human rights still continues to be a hotly debated issue. Western countries, which were essentially the ones to draw up the declaration, have used it as an expansionist ideology and a pretext for intervening in the internal affairs of other states. By publicizing and propagating the so-called idea that human rights are global, they are in fact seeking to propagate Western culture to other communities and to carry out aggressive acts. For example, only in the U.S. continent in the past 15 years whenever the United States has sent troops to other states in the region, it invariably has put forward the observance of human rights as one of its main reasons for its military operations. So much so that in its attacks against the Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, and Panama, this weapon was invariably resorted to. Therefore past experiences indicate that human rights and their advocation, in Western eyes, are official and blatant means for the systematic and constant violation of human rights.

Beside that, double standards and biased approaches toward the human rights issue are rife. When it comes to human rights, Western countries have divided the countries of the world into friendly and ally countries and rival and enemy ones. In the first category, any event, even at the level of genocide and crimes against humanity, as well as severe and blatant violations of human rights, are filed away under a seal of silence. But when it comes to independent and anti-hegemonist countries, dossiers must be made up against them under any pretext.

There is an interesting instance of this going on now in the UN General Assembly's third committee. Apparently Western countries, in order to keep the human rights issue in Iran alive, are seeking to impose a new resolution by citing Galindo Pohl's earlier reports, which are full of information obtained from the terrorist group Monafeqin [meaning hypocrites; term used by Iran to describe the Mojahedin-e Khalq Organization opposition group]. And this when time and again the Islamic Republic of Iran's representatives in Geneva and New York have given full and documentary replies to the objection raised in those reports. Even the new UN Human Rights Commission envoy for Iran has also objected to that action. Iran's representative, responding to that malicious and irresponsible action, says: Whether they like it or not we will remain committed to our Islamic principles and values and at the same time will continue to work with those who sincerely seek to enhance and safeguard human rights.

In any case, whatever Western countries do, such resolutions merely document ill will and abuse of human rights. Essentially, while in the heart of Europe genocide and war crimes are being perpetrated under the eyes of advocates of human rights, what will be the worth of such resolutions?

Khamene'i Addresses University Students in Qom

LD0912181295 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 9 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Speaking in Qom, His Eminence Ayatollah 'Ali Khamene'i, the leader of the revolution, stressed at a gathering of representatives of Islamic associations in universities this evening: Universities must be an environment for the promotion of political knowledge and intelligence and the development of Islamic faith and thinking, strengthening of a spirit of devotion to God, and the expansion of the inclination to safeguard the achievements of the Islamic Revolution; these things must be taken very seriously at universities.

The eminent leader said the following regarding describing the importance of universities and university students: Universities are all-important in all countries and university students are, in fact, the designers of the future in any society. Khamene'i added: In Iran, universities were founded on the basis of the spreading of irreligious ideas and uprooting religion and, for 50 years, university environments tried to draw away the country's youth from cultural values and from religion and spirituality. However, with the establishment of the Islamic system, all those goals were foiled.

The eminent leader of the revolution spoke of the decisive influence on nations of the great movement of the Muslim nation of Iran and said: Today, the issue of religion and religiosity is raised throughout the world, especially in Islamic countries and on university campuses and, in welcoming Islam, the world looks with admiration at the Muslim nation of Iran, and it sees Islamic Iran as a model in so far as the promotion and consolidation of the tendency to embrace religion is concerned. This is a reality which the propaganda of arrogance cannot hide.

Khamene'i added: On the basis of a correct analysis of the trend of developments in the world and in view of the role played by Islamic Iran in the increasing inclination of nations to embrace religion, the promotion and expansion of religious criteria is of great importance for the country's universities and student associations have a fundamental role to play in this regard.

The eminent leader explained: Due to the strength and steadfastness of the Muslim nation of Iran in the face

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of a variety of foreign pressures, the United States is trying to make the Muslim nation of Iran indifferent to the revolution and, then, to hear any word which could possibly hint at a retreat from Islamic Iran and, by magnifying it, to use it to prevent nations from seeking inspiration in the Islamic system of Iran. However, the Iranian nation remains dear and strong as before and continues to move in the path of God without the slightest deviation or fear and to stand true to its aims and values. [passage omitted]

Ayatollah Meshkini Delivers Qom Friday Sermons

LD0912211995

[FBIS Editorial Report] Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian at 1423 GMT on 9 December carries a 34-minute recording of the Qom Friday prayers from 8 December. The sermons were delivered by Ayatollah 'Ali Akbar Meshkini-Qomi.

Meshkini begins by urging everyone, including himself, to uphold piety. Then he recalls Imam 'Ali's birthday last week and goes on to congratulate the Lord of the Age, that is the Hidden 12th Imam, on this unparalleled event. He mentions that he does not know where the Lord of the Age is at the moment. "I do not know where he is right now; whether he is walking around in Mecca, whether he is paying a pilgrimage to his ancestor in Najaf, whether he is in Mashhad, or in this gathering. I do not know. We shall not be fortunate to light our eyes on his visage. We offer our congratulations to the Remainder of God and then to our exalted leader..." Meshkini reads out a few of examples 'Ali's advice and embellishes them with an anecdote relating Ahmad Khomeyni's dream about his father Imam Khomeyni and other digressions. Then he begins prayers to end the first sermon.

Meshkini begins the second sermon by referring to the birthdays of four Shiite Imams who have been born during the Islamic month of Rajab. Ayatollah Khamene'i's visit to Qom is his next subject he addresses Meshkini welcomes him on behalf of every sector and individual of the Qom community and its surroundings.

He then reminds the foreign media of this great welcome and tells them that they will never see the end of the Islamic Republic. Meshkini then praises the Qom clerics for not being parochial in their requests from the great leader of the Islamic revolution.

Meshkini says: "Thanks be to God, during his [Khamene'i's] visit to the sanctified shrine of Her Holiness Ma'sumeh and his arrival in Qom, a decisive majority of all the religious scholars, clerics and the people of Qom met him. A decisive majority of the sources of emulation, of the seminarians, of the religious teachers; whether in his home or outside it met him. I thank all of them.

"Let the broadcasters of the world say what they will. Their statements are motivated by nothing but malice and bias. Let them say what they will; there is no division between the clerics and the people; the people have not become distrustful towards the clerics; the people have not become distrustful towards their government; the people support their leader; the people support the clerics; the clerics love the nation, the nation loves the clerics; the nation loves the army and the [Revolution Guard] Corps; the people are basijis [volunteers]; Iran is united; there is no division in Iran; there is no difference of opinion in Iran; there is no power struggle in Iran; there is no clash between the government and the nation; there is no separation of the leader and the source of emulation; there are no differences in Iran. No matter how those foreign broadcasters and media say or think that one day they will witness divisions in Iran and the toppling of Iran's regime, or the like, let me tell them: I do tell them: God willing and by God's grace you will take all those wishes to your graves and will not be able..."

The crowd's chants of "God is great" interrupt Meshkini at this point, and he does not finish his sentence. Meshkini next goes on to say that to those who refer to high prices, in general terms, should be aware that they are doing quite well compared to other countries. Even the Japanese take apples home when the Iranians have plenty of that, he says.

Meshkini then concludes the second sermon with the closing prayers.

Ayatollah Yazdi Delivers 'Second' Friday Prayers

LD0812134795 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran Provincial Network in Persian 0803 GMT 8 Dec 95

['Second' Friday prayers sermon by Ayatollah Mohammad Yazdi, head of the judiciary, in Tehran; date not given — recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. [passage omitted]

An issue which I would like to address is the forthcoming Majles elections. I only want to say a few sentences about these elections.

We are all aware that within the Islamic political system, the Islamic Consultative Assembly enjoys particular importance. The entire Islamic political apparatus acts on the basis of the legislation made by the Majles. Bills and proposals come to the Majles, where they

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are reviewed by its various committees. Then these bills are debated in the parliament [preceding word in French]. Perhaps it is no longer appropriate to use the term parliament. These bills, then, come to the Islamic Consultative Assembly where the deputies speak for or against them. [passage omitted]

When these bills become an act, they are conveyed to the executive or to the judiciary for implementation. Naturally, as you are aware, it is these laws which define the issues and the interests of the country. The main lines of policy are of course drawn by the leadership. However, the details are worked out by the Majles. This institution, therefore, is highly important.

One should bear in mind that the individuals who take part in the various committees of the Majles or in the general Majles debates must enjoy sufficient religious commitment and also the necessary expertise.

It is sometimes said that our system is an Islamic and divine one where knowledge of Islamic tenets is essential. It is, of course, true that the Council of Guardians controls affairs, but nonetheless there is still a great deal of importance attached to the presence of the clergy or other individuals who know about Islamic principles and tenets. This issue should definitely be borne in mind.

Everyone in this country is free to either run as a candidate or to nominate someone else, within the boundaries of the laws, of course. Nobody should say that he cannot run as a candidate or nominate someone else because there is no freedom in the country. I call on these people to come forward, to try their luck, and to see what people think about them. If your information tells you that you do not enjoy the necessary social status [to be a candidate], then you should not blame this on the political system and the people, or on the so-called lack of freedom in the country. Why do you say there is no freedom? Who is stopping you?

If you possess the requirements laid down by the law, then you should run as candidates in order to see the degree of people's sympathy for you. This would be much better than levelling needless accusations against the political system.

Everyone with the necessary legal conditions is free to take part. Of course, supervisory organs will nevertheless carry out their duties.

As far as we are concerned, as we have said before, the judiciary will be active both in the area of confronting individuals who violate the [election] laws, and also stopping possible cases of judges expressing support for a particular individual or political grouping. A committee has also been formed tasked with insuring that a judge will not express preference for any particular candidate. This is because our Constitution says that the judiciary should safeguard the rights of all people, and taking the side of one person would mean violating the rights of his opponent. Such moves, therefore, are against the law and also contradict religious principles. A judge, therefore, should not support a particular candidate.

Our people are free in these elections. Naturally, the first issue is the participation of people in these elections. The more extensive this participation... [pauses] Of course, our people have already passed their tests and have always had an extensive presence in these events.

The second issue is the need to choose the right person. You should vote for the candidate in whose suitability you have faith. You may have gained this faith either through your own information, or by asking others, or indeed by any other channel. When you determine that your candidate is suitable for the interests of the religion of God, the country, and the political system, then you should go out and cast your vote for him. [passage omitted]

Although my time is short I will say a few words about human rights. We hold open courts; lawyers attend; foreign and Iranian correspondents attend; many sessions are held; somebody called Fazel, for example, is sentenced to death; he is informed of the sentence; he appeals; his appeal is referred to the Supreme Court; the Supreme Court reviews the case, confirms the sentence, and it is carried out. Then you see the advocates of human rights write about it. They have even written to me saying: We are concerned for so- and-so's life. I am really surprised.

A person who has violated, trampled on, and disregarded the rights of 60 million people and who has placed no value on the sovereignty of those 60 million people, has been convicted in accordance with the country's laws and regulations and all standards, and the sentences has been carried out. But those gentlemen say: We are concerned, we support human rights.

Insurgents and narcotics smugglers in the south, west, and east of the country are dealt with. Naturally, they are tried in accordance with regulations; all procedures are followed. In the final stage, as you know, the verdict is confirmed by one of the two highest judicial officials in the country, that is, the prosecutor-general or the chief justice. [passage omitted] Then, when the sentence is carried out, those advocates of human rights write to us — they even mention the name of the insurgents in their letter — and say: We are concerned for the lives of those people. [passage omitted]

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The UN special envoy, Mr. Galindo Pohl, came to this country once or twice. He prepared some reports. Most of what he said in his reports was untrue. He was, therefore, informed that he would no longer be welcome here because his reports were biased and he had become a tool for implementing certain policies. He was no longer a neutral envoy on human rights issues, but a political agent. Well, he did not come any more and a replacement had to be found.

After some discussion, someone was appointed. I am not sure how to pronounce his name, Mr. [Maurice Danby Copithorne] was chosen. After his appointment, the first question was whether he should be allowed to come to Iran or not? As far as we are concerned, I announced that he can come. He can come and see the facts for himself. However, if it is planned that he should come here as a tool to implement certain policies, then the answer is no. He can come and report the facts. I think this issue is currently being discussed in the Third Commission of the UN.

Despite Mr. [Copithorne's] own statement that he has not visited Iran yet and does not, therefore, know much about the country, and that in accordance with the regulations he should prepare a report after his visit to Iran, a report has been prepared in advance. This report is a carbon copy of earlier reports. The evidence prepared in this report was compiled by referring to the allegations made by our opponents. These opponents include the hypocrites [Mojahedin-e Khlaq] and others. At this point I must say that in the past we have defended ourselves against these allegations. We raised the matter [at the UN headquarters] in Geneva and the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran rejected all the allegations. Nevertheless, a report has been prepared in advance to condemn Iran.

I, as an official in charge of the country's judicial authority, would like to announce here that whatever verdict is going to be issued against us has no legal validity, because the evidence they have collected is biased and false. [crowd shouts approval]

My next point is about the agreement that they signed after 20-odd days of talks at a military base in Dayton, under the auspices of the United States and attended by the presidents of Yugoslavia [as heard], Croatia, and Bosnia, the salient points of which they announced and which we are all aware of; it is said that the full text of the agreement is in 100 pages. I have no time to talk about its contents, with which I am somewhat familiar, but I will say this: First, a court to look into Serbian war crimes must definitely be convened. Otherwise, if they do not look into this issue, peace will definitely not be accomplished. That is one point.

The second point is that in such a peace and such an agreement, which, as [Bosnian President] Mr. Izetbegovic has said, is an unfair peace but which is better than war, the world's Muslims should really rush to the aid of the Bosnian Muslims and help them in any way they can.

The issue of the European Union and the United States and their agreement, and the U.S. insistence that the Europeans should reduce their relations with Iran, saying: If you [Europeans] give way a little, we [Americans] will make up for it. This issue requires a lengthy discussion. I do not understand why the United States insists so much that Asia and Europe should abandon Iran. Well, other countries' rulers have to serve their own interests. They say they cannot ignore a big country like Iran for A.merica's sake. The United States insists on driving them away. It is very interesting how in that agreement — one side of which is the European Union and the other the United States — and which has many problems, the United States has not been able to achieve the desired result.

The issue of Afghanistan is really regrettable. One does not know what to say to those brothers. How long? Why? [passage omitted] Peace and God's mercy be upon you.

Pakistan

Egyptian Group Said Threatening Planes, Airports

BK0912111995 Islamabad THE NATION in English 9 Dec 95 p 12

["Special Report"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] — The activists of Jama'at Islamia, the organization which claimed the responsibility of bombing Egyptian Embassy at Islamabad, have threatened if allegations against them were not stopped, they can start hijacking planes and create dangerous situations at the airports.

After receiving this menacing threat the Defence Ministry has tightened security at various air ports including Lahore Airport, Karachi Airport and Islamabad Airport and put the security staff at red alert. The security staff have also been instructed to take immediate action against the suspects and deal with any imminent danger. Besides, the security checking of foreign passengers including the Egyptians, has been made stricter. The movements of all foreigners are being closely monitored. The Civil Aviation Authority high-ups have been instructed to ensure 'safety and security ' on incoming and outgoing flights. However, the ASF [expansion unknown] staff have been given verbal directions not to

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unduly bother the passengers but strictly check the luggage of the suspects.

Egyptian Embassy Bomb Probe in 'Advanced Stage'

BK1012101895 Islamabad THE NATION in English 10 Dec 95 p 14

[APP report]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad (APP) — Head of the team investigating into the suicidal bomb attack on Egyptian embassy, SP [superintendent of police] (Crimes) Haq Nawaz Kiyani said Saturday [9 December] the probe into the incident was in "advanced stage."

"The investigation is at an advanced stage and Inshallah [God willing] soon something positive will come out," Kiyani said at a news conference at his office.

He said the police have not arrested anyone suspected of involvement in the blast, which left more than 15 persons dead but only interrogating some suspects.

"There are about 35 suspects that we are interrogating but have not arrested anyone yet." Kiyani however did not say exactly how many of those suspect persons were of foreign origin but remarked, some of them are foreigners.

Kiyani said, an Afghan national working at the Egyptian embassy, reported missing in the press after the blast, had actually gone on leave few days (before the blast) and has returned to work.

He commended the efforts of the Attock police in tracing the owner of the vehicle used in the blast after Islamabad police provided them with chassis and engine numbers.

Kiyani dismissed the reports that Islamabad police have been "harassing" the students of the Islamic University. "It is totally wrong that there has been harassment of them from any of us. None of the 35 suspects we are interrogating are students of the Islamic University."

He did not agree with a questioner that Islamabad police have failed in their security arrangements and that is why the Frontier Constabulary has been called in the capital. "They are here only to assist us. There is nothing extraordinary about their presence."

Kiyani expressed satisfaction over the police efficiency during the past one month and said that the special cell to check car thefts traced a number of cases and recovered and returned house hold goods worth more than four lakh six-three thousand and eight hundred. Besides, the police also recovered two cars costing Rs [rupees] 9 Lakh 50 thousand, two stolen motorcycles worth more than Rs 60,000 and three bicycles worth more than Rs 8000.

As part of campaign against illegal arms and ammunition 16 pistols, 2 rifles, one carbine, one dagger and 96 bullets were recovered. 15 persons were arrested while gambling and an amount of Rs 55,000 and two cars were confiscated. The Islamabad traffic police challenged 6169 vehicles including 240 for over speeding, 820 for reckless driving and 225 for unregistered vehicles, 380 for smoke emitting vehicles, 775 for overloading and 3729 in miscellaneous category.

He also appealed the citizens to avoid making false calls on 15 police emergency as the service is exclusively for the people in dire need and should not be misused.

Officials on Israel, U.S. 'Shift' on Kashmir

BK1012094795 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 10 Dec 95 p 1

[Report by Mariana Baabar]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad — The government has strongly denied a statement by US Assistant Secretary State Robin Raphel that Pakistan has decided to recognise Israel.

So sensitive is this subject that several senior officials, some of them working closely with the Prime Minister, chose to speak only anonymously.

Raphel admitted for the first time that Washington had asked Pakistan to recognise Israel and be among the first few of the Muslim countries to do so. But Pakistan had opted to wait and be among the countries that would recognise the Jewish state later.

"The Americans are very realistic people and they know our views on this issue. It is for this reason that they have never, never brought up the issue for discussion," said one official. He added that the whole topic is so hopeless that officials of the State Department are reluctant to bring it up for discussion with us.

Others working on issues relating to Washington and Islamabad said, "We are quite surprised at this statement." When asked whether the recognition of Israel by Pakistan can come up in the one to one talks between State Department and Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, one official said, "Whatever is discussed somehow filters down to us and even if we did not have the exact minutes we would have known if the subject was taken up."

The general perception in the country has been that with events settling down in the Middle East, Pakistan would

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find no reason for not recognising Israel once states like Saudi Arabia had done so.

Recently when Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto visited New York to participate in the 50th anniversary celebrations of the United Nations there were rumours that her three hours of unexplained absence were due to a clandestine meeting with the late Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin. The Foreign Office denied this.

Meanwhile, the government appeared quite relaxed on Saturday in face of reports of 'visible shift' in Washington's South Asian policy on the occupied Kashmir.

The shift was also claimed by Raphel in statement to the House International Relations Sub-committee on Asia and Pacific on Thursday. While her written statement made available to the press said nothing new and its emphasis lay on dialogue between New Delhi and Islamabad, it was one of her answers that sparked a debate.

Recalling the United Nations Security Council resolutions on the occupied Kashmir, Raphel said, "It is time not to look at past prescriptions but to come up with a prescription that fits the situation on the ground and the current political reality."

A spokesman for the Foreign Office said, "Robin Raphel's statement should be read as a whole in the context of earlier statements on this subject. The Americans and, in fact, no other government has ever questioned the soundness of the United Nations Security Council resolutions. America continues to regard Kashmir as a disputed territory."

Bhutto Chairs 'High-Level' Meeting on Karachi

BK0912162895 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1300 GMT 9 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] A high-level meeting was held in Karachi today to review the overall law and order situation and pace of development activities in Sindh. Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, who chaired the meeting, expressed satisfaction over the law and order situation which has considerably improved during the last several weeks in the province, particularly in Karachi.

The meeting noted that there is peace in Karachi for the past few days and in fact there is no report of any casualty by acts of terrorism or other crimes. The prime minister was informed that several major gangs of terrorists in the city have been smashed and many terrorists convicted, but there are still a few major gangs of terrorists operating. During the meeting, the prime minister stressed that there is no basis of giving a call for strike because the doors of political dialogue are open and the political process is in progress. The prime minister pointed out that the government wants to separate crimes and terrorism from politics. She also appreciated the development activities being carried out in the troubled areas of Karachi. She sanctioned more funds to carry out work in the areas of Karachi District Central.

The prime minister was informed that load shedding has been reduced in Karachi. On this occasion, the prime minister called for chalking out a comprehensive plan expeditiously to provide sufficient water supply for the citizens.

MQM Leader's Relatives Killed in Karachi

Assailants Said Unknown

BK1012081695 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 10 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Professor N.D. Khan, the federal minister for law and parliamentary affairs, has invited the Altaf Group to resume negotiations on the restoration of peace in Karachi. Speaking to reporters in Lahore yesterday, he said if the Altaf Group helps to improve the situation in Karachi, it may be granted certain concessions.

According to a press note, four people were killed and two vehicles were set on fire in various incidents of terrorism in Karachi yesterday. The press note said the bodies of two people, who were later identified and whose ages range from 50 to 60 and 35 to 36, were recovered near Khwaja Chowk in District Malir. They were shot to death by unidentified assailants. One corpse was recovered in District Central and another in District West.

[Hong Kong AFP in English at 0718 GMT on 10 December in a Karachi-datelined item adds: "Troops and police were out on the streets of strife-torn Karachi in force Sunday [10 December] to confront rising tension after the tortured bodies of an opposition leader's brother and nephew were found. Gunfire echoed across Pakistan's largest city as the powerful Muhajir Qaumi Movement (MQM), blaming security forces for the deaths of the relatives of its exile leader Altaf Hussain, called a three day strike to mourn 62-year-old Nasir Hussain and his son Arif Hussain 28."

[AFP adds: "The latest victims were found with their hands and feet bound in the Gadap district of eastern Karachi late Saturday. They were later identified by members of the Hussain family in a private mortuary and anger over their deaths soon spread. MQM leaders said the party chief's elder brother and nephew were

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tortured and killed by security forces. The authorities denied any knowledge of the killings. Nasir Hussain and his son went missing last Tuesday. MQM Coordination Committee [word indistinct] Ishtiaq Azhar, said both had been detained by the security forces."

[AFP continues: "Karachi police chief Shoaib Suddle denied that the MQM leader's brother and nephew had been arrested by the security forces. 'We had sent a senior police official to investigate the matter, but there was nobody to give us any sort of information,' he told AFP. But another MQM leader Shoaib Bukhari said: 'We will not sit idly until those responsible are punished.'"]

Further on Murder of Chief's Relatives

BK1012085095 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 10 Dec 95 pp 1, 12

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Karachi — Missing brother and nephew of MQM [Muhajir Qaumi Movement] chief Altaf Hussain were found dead with multiple bullet wounds and torture marks on their bodies on Saturday [9 December] in Karachi's Gadap area.

Reacting to the killing, the MQM decided to extend its already called strike for today (Sunday) to three days as a mark of protest against the government's high-handedness and to mourn the deaths of Altaf Hussain's relatives.

The MQM had alleged that Altaf's brother Nasir Hussain and nephew Arif Hussain were picked up by the rangers and police on Tuesday and Wednesday, respectively. According to the MQM the two had been arrested in different raids and were in the custody of the law enforcement personnel.

Rangers and police both are denying the charge saying that Nasir and his son Arif were never in their custody. The denial was issued on Friday and Saturday whereas MQM had levelled the charge of arresting them on Thursday.

The bodies with their hands and legs tied and blindfolded, were found from bushes in Gadap area on Saturday morning and were lying in the morgue of Edhi Centre, Sohrab Goth.

Marks of torture caused by hard and blunt objects were also visible. Both were declared unidentified but late in the evening a niece of Altaf Hussain along with other female members of the family and MQM Coordination Committee member Shoaib Bokhari visited the morgue and identified them as Nasir Hussain and Arif Hussain.

Following the denial of authorities, the MQM Coordination Committee had said the lives of the two were in danger. They had appealed to President Farooq Leghari to save their lives.

Although the bodies were found and identified, the city police chief maintained that the two were not in the police custody. "A senior police officer was sent to the residence of the two but there was nobody to confirm the MQM's claim. We have yet to verify the claim about the bodies, said Shoaib Suddle.

The two bodies were shifted to Edhi home cold storage at Sohrab Goth after post mortem at Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Centre and they remained unidentified till late in the evening.

Nasir Hussain, son of Nazir Hussain, was 62 years old and retired from government service as first class gazetted officer some five years back. He leaves a son two daughters and widow to mourn his death. His son Arif Hussain was a graduate of NED [expansion unknown] University of Engineering and Technology and associated with the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation. He was the bread earner of his family.

Despite being brother and nephew of Altaf Hussain, neither Nasir Hussain nor Arif Hussain were known in the political arena.

Meanwhile, the MQM Coordination Committee has decided after consulting the bereaved family that funeral of the father and son will take place on Tuesday after Zohr [morning] prayers. Namaz-e-Janaza [funereal prayer] of the two victims would be held at the Jinnah Ground, near the Azizabad residence of Altaf Hussain, and the coordination committee appealed to the people to attend the same in large numbers.

An emergency meeting of the MQM Coordination Committee was in session with Convener Senator Ishtiaq Azhar in the chair. All other leaders present in the city reached the MQM headquarters Nine-Zero [as published] and were consoling the people already gathered there after getting the information about the death of Altaf's brother and nephew.

Brother of Sindh Chief Minister Syed Abdullah Shah was gunned down along with two other people in Gulberg area last month. The government has alleged MQM's involvement in the killing which was denied by the MQM.

Meanwhile, on the eve of Sunday's strike, groups of armed youths lit bonfires on roads and set two vehicles on fire in some parts of Karachi and police said they had arrested four armed men while they were trying to torch a bus. Three people were gunned down in different parts of the city on the day.

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Strike Observed To Protest 'Brutal Killing'

BK1012111495 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1000 GMT 10 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] A strike is being observed in Karachi today following the appeal by the Muhajir Qaumi Movement [MQM]-Altaf Group to protest the alleged arrest of the group's activists. [passage omitted]

Commenting on the brutal killing of the two close relatives of Altaf Hussain, sources said it is a despicable conspiracy to spark violence. Referring to the situation in Karachi, the sources said that upon receipt of the information on the alleged arrest of Nasir Hussain and his son Arif Hussain, Rangers and police investigated the matter and made it clear that they had not been arrested by the law enforcement agencies. The law enforcement agencies have categorically rejected newspaper reports to that effect.

Presiding over a meeting yesterday on the law and order situation in the city, the prime minister said Nasir Hussain and Arif Hussain were are not in the custody of the law enforcement agencies. Sources have stated that since the legal heirs did not file a formal first information report on the disappearance of the two, a senior police official went to the house of the deceased yesterday to collect the details of the matter but found the house locked.

Sindh Governor Kamal Azfar held telephone conversations with Senators Nasrin Jalil and Ishtiaq Azhar yesterday evening and apprised them of the government's stance and the realities. These sources said there was apprehension that unidentified killers could have assassinated both of them. Their bodies were later recovered by the Edhi Trust Foundation in Gadap and were brought to the Foundation's center at Sohrabgoth.

MQM Chief Issues Statement on Killings

BK1112053995 (Internet) MQM NEWS in English 9 Dec 95

[Statement issued by Altaf Hussain, leader of the Muhajir Qaumi Movement, in London on 9 December]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Martyrs of my nation, today your brother Altaf Hussain's family has joined you. The way ruthless ruler have killed you, today the same ruthless rulers have killed the elder brother (Nasir Hussain) and nephew (Arif Hussain) of your Altaf Bhai. My brother and nephew were innocent and they had no link with politics, but ruthless rulers killed them.

My dear mothers, sisters, elders and hopeful workers of my nation, please pray for me that May Allah give me and the family of Shaheeds courage to survive the grief. My dear movement workers, don't be disappointed and don't lose your hearts. Allah is watching us and everything. He is going to do the justice one day.

Today I appeal to the national leaders, intellectuals, journalists, writers and members of all other professions, please raise your voice against the injustice and massacre of innocent Muhajirs and call injustice an injustice.

My dear mothers, sisters, elders and movement workers and supporters of my nation, please pray that may Allah reward my brother and nephew with peace and give courage to the family - Amen.

Murders Said Due to 'State Terrorism'

BK1012092095 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 10 Dec 95 p 1

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Karachi — MQM [Muhajir Qaumi Movement] chief Altaf Hussain while expressing his emotions at the killing of his elder brother and nephew, has said that his family had also joined the hundreds of other Muhajir families which had lost their loved ones.

In a faxed statement on Saturday [9 December] night, Altaf said both Nasir Hussain and Arif Hussain were innocent and had no link whatsoever with politics. But they were killed by the rulers by resorting to state terrorism, he alleged.

Altaf said God was taking everything into account and the oppressors would not be spared. He asked the Muhajir nation and his party workers not to lose heart and pray to God to rest the departed souls in peace.

Altaf also appealed to the national leaders, intellectuals, journalists and people from every walk of life to raise voice against the cruelties being perpetrated by the government against the Muhajirs.

He said "their death could not force him to give up long drawn peaceful democratic struggle for the rights of down-trodden people of the country in general and the fundamental rights and privileges of the Muhajirs in particular like any citizens of the country, as enshrined in the constitution."

The chief of the Muhajir Qaumi Movement said he would never compromise on the rights of the Muhajirs and added the government has set in yet another example of brutal rule.

MQM Letter Blames Government

BK1112052095 (Internet) MQM NEWS in English 9 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Mr. Nasir Hussain 62, elder brother of the Quaid-e-Tehrik Altaf Hussain, who was

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arrested by the Police and Paramilitary Rangers personnel on December 6 from his home, has been found murdered in cold blood. Also Mr. Nasir Hussain's son Arif Hussain 28, nephew of Quaid-e-Tehrik, who was arrested on the night of 4/5 December 1995, has been murdered in custody. Their bullet riddled bodies were dumped in Gadap area of Karachi. The photographs indicate that there are severe torture marks upon their bodies.

According to the press release from MQM [Muhajir Qaumi Movement] International Secretariat in London, the MQM reported their arrest to the press and the members of MQM Central Coordination Committee appealed to the President of Pakistan, the Chief of Army Staff, the Judges of Supreme Courts and High Courts of Pakistan to intervene immediately in order to save their lives. But all this was to no avail, as the barbaric rulers of Pakistan have once again displayed their callousness in brutally murdering innocent Muhajirs. It has now been proved beyond doubt that the Bhutto Government is not fit to stay in Power any longer.

Quaid-e-Tehrik appealed to his party members not to be despondent and stay calm, and to national leaders, intellectuals and writers to come forward and call a spade a spade.

The MQM Central Committee has declared 10, 11 and 12 December 1995 as days of mourning. The Central Coordination Committee of MQM has also asked the Mohajirs Nation not to rest until the Government agency personnel responsible for this barbarity are duly punished. The MQM will announce its future plan of action after the three days of mourning.

Shaheed Nasir Hussain son of Nasir Hussain was 62 years old. His grand father Maulvi Mufti Mohammad Ramzan was the grand mufti of Agrah. Shaheed Nasir Hussain was a first Class Gazetted officer and was retired 20 years ago as a government employee. 28 years Shaheed Arif Hussain son of Nasir Hussain was unmarried and a graduate of NED University of Engineering and Technology. He was employed by Baldia (KMC) Karachi as an engineer. Saheed Nasir Hussain left a widow, 2 sons and 2 daughters behind him. Funeral would take place on October 12, 1995 after Zuhr prayer at Jinnah Ground, Federal [word indistinct] area.

Government Condemns Killing

BK1012114395 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1100 GMT 10 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The government today approached the opposition formalizing Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's offer for a dialogue to repeal the Eighth Amendment and restoration of reserved seats for women in the legislatures. The letter of formalization by the prime minister regarding her offer made in Quetta to the leader of the opposition was handed over by the law minister, Mr. N.D. Khan, and political secretary to the prime minister, Mr. Nahid Khan, to a senior Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz Group leader, Syed Iftikhar Hussain Gilani, in Islamabad. This was stated by the minister of state for law and justice, Mr. Raza Rabbani, in Islamabad this afternoon.

He said the government and the prime minister have condemned in the strongest possible terms the killing of the half-brother and nephew of Mr. Altaf Hussain. He assured that the government will leave no stone unturned to unveil the faces behind the killings. He said on Thursday [7 December] it was reported that the two gentlemen were missing and on Friday the police and Rangers made categorical statements that they were not taken into custody by them. At the high-level meeting in Karachi on Saturday on law and order, all the agencies made it clear that they do not have the two men in their custody.

Bhutto Expresses 'Grief'

BK1012135695 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1300 GMT 10 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto has expressed grief and outrage over the kidnapping and subsequent murder of Altaf Hussain's brother, Mr. Nasir Hussain, and his nephew, Arif Hussain, on Saturday [9 December] in Karachi and ordered the concerned law enforcing agencies to immediately go into the depth of the case and expose and arrest the real culprits behind the gruesome incident. The prime minister said this while presiding over a law and order meeting at the prime minister's house in Islamabad.

The prime minister was informed that the kidnapping of Mr. Nasir Hussain took place on the evening of Thursday, 7 December. The Altaf Group had alleged that the law enforcing agencies had kidnapped Nasir Hussain and his son. The provincial government and law enforcing agencies promptly rebutted the allegation and offered the aggrieved family all assistance in apprehending the culprits. Although no FIR [first information report] had been lodged, the provincial government sent a senior police officer to the house of Mr. Nasir Hussain, which was found locked.

The meeting was attended by Federal Ministers Major General retired Nasiruallah Khan Babar, Professor N.D. Khan, Senator Raza Rabbani, former Minister Senator Syed Iqbal Haider, and secretary interior.

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Bhutto Views Karachi, Economy, Press Freedom

BK1012164195 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 10 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Speaking to reporters in her parliament chamber this evening, Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto said there has been apparent success in the antiterrorist drive in Karachi. She said it is an complex situation, however, and will take some time to normalize. She said a number of notorious gangs have been arrested with the help of the local population and there has been more improvement in the situation during the past few weeks. She said the remaining terrorist gangs are concentrating on intensification of crimes rather than indulging in a large number of killings. In this connection, she referred to the killing of the brother of the Sindh chief minister and the half brother of Altaf Hussain, the massacre of 15 workers, and the firing of seven rockets at the Sindh Secretariat.

On the strike appeal by the Altaf Group, she said the Sindh governor has contacted the Altaf Group and asked them to end the strike so that peace is not disrupted.

She said she is very sad over the killing of the brothers of the Sindh Chief minister and Altaf Hussain, and those involved in these murders will be arrested.

Benazir Bhutto said there are reports that a terrorist group has been sent upcountry for terrorist activities. The Interior Ministry is taking precautionary measures. She appealed to the people, especially the people of Karachi, to foil such enemy designs. She said the involvement of a foreign hand in the terrorist activities cannot be ruled out. Javed Langda [not further identified] is visiting other countries to recruit and train terrorists.

Referring to the current political situation in the country, the prime minister said general elections will be held under the Constitution in 1998. There is no scope for any sort of interim setup. She said: My government has made several efforts to create an atmosphere of understanding with the opposition. We have not arrested the opposition leader. We have withdrawn the treason charge against him and did not oppose bail for his father and nephew. She said the Pakistan Democratic Front is prepared to hold direct negotiations with the opposition.

The prime minister said: My government is fully aware of the difficulties of the people due to price hikes. The objective of all our efforts is to bring down inflation, control price hikes, create employment opportunities, and provide basic amenities like electricity and gas to the common people. The government is also taking steps toward this. She expressed the hope that as a result of these policies, inflation would be brought down and new employment opportunities created. She said the country's economy was crippled after the former government took too many loans and we have tightened financial discipline. She said the rumors being circulated these days on the economic situation in the country are baseless.

In reply to another question, she said the Indus Dam or any other dam will only be constructed with a consensus of the four provinces. Some changes have been made to the Indus Dam project and it will be constructed in place of the Kalabagh Dam only with the support of the people as well as the consensus of the four provinces.

The prime minister said she believes in freedom of the press and no vindictive legislation will be enacted. Nevertheless, the newspaper societies should formulate their own code of conduct.

Sindh Government Orders Probe Into Karachi Deaths

BK1012141495 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1300 GMT 10 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Sindh chief minister, Syed Abdullah Shah, expressed his deepest sense of sorrow and grief on the sad demise of Mr. Nasir Hussain and Arif Hussain [MQM leader Altaf Hussain's brother and nephew]. In a condolence message to the bereaved family, the chief minister said every innocent citizen who is a victim of terrorism is my brother and to apprehend the culprit is the duty of my government. The chief minister further said we will apprehend the culprit responsible for the tragic incident and get exemplary punishment for them through law of the land.

The Sindh Government has ordered an inquiry into the murder of late Nasir Hussain and his son. Addressing a news conference in Karachi this afternoon, the provincial minister for planning and development, Mr. Nissar Ahmad Khoro, said that the inquiry will be conducted by a judge of High Court and the chief justice of the Sindh High Court will appoint a judge for this purpose. The inquiry will be open and the process of appointing a judge and the commencement of the inquiry will not take more than a week.

Mr. Nissar Khoro appealed to the Altaf Group to withdraw its three-day strike call as strikes and closures not only harm the process of economic growth in the province, but cause immense problem to the common man.

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Babar Denies Government Behind Karachi Murder

BK1112050595 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 11 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Interior Minister Nasirullah Khan Babar has informed the National Assembly that the government is determined to arrest the criminals involved in the killing of the brother and the nephew of Altaf Hussain and to punish them. Winding up a debate on the Karachi situation in the house, he said certain parties do not want peace to return to Karachi, but that the government will unearth the conspiracy as to who is behind the incidents of terrorism. He rejected the allegations that law enforcement agencies had taken away the brother and the nephew of Altaf Hussain.

Deputy Opposition Leader Gauhar Ayub Khan and other members who spoke on the issue also condemned the killings and emphasized that the Karachi situation should be resolved immediately because it is affecting the political and economic stability of the country. The speakers included Shahid Khaqan Abbasi, Mian Abdul Waheed, Dr. Yasin Baloch, Hamza, Malik Lal Khan, Ejazul Haq, Mozaffar Ahmad Hashmir, Ghazanfar Gul, and Hafiz Mohammad Taqi. Later, the house held further debate on the president's address to the joint sitting of parliament. The house will meet again this afternoon.

The Sindh Government has issued a statement in Karachi, saying that the investigation into the kidnapping and murder of Altaf Hussain's brother and nephew is under way and every effort is being made to trace the criminals involved in this heinous crime. The statement says a special team from the Criminal Investigation Agency is investigating the possible motives of this case, as the double murder may be the result of internal gang warfare by the extremists who do not want the process of negotiations between the government and the Altaf Group to be fruitful.

Sindh Governor Kamaluddin Azfar has expressed grief and sorrow over the murder of Altaf Hussain's brother and nephew and appealed to the people to extend their cooperation in identifying the culprits behind this heinous crime. In an interview, he said every possible effort will be made to arrest the culprits and give them exemplary punishment. The governor made it clear that nothing can be achieved from strikes. He said he has attempted to talk to Altaf Hussain, but he was not at his residence. He will try to contact him again to discuss the latest situation with him. Talking to newsmen at a briefing at the Port Qasim Authority, Azfar said he was shocked to know about the murder of these persons who had nothing to do with politics. He said this criminal act is the handiwork of those who want to create tension to destroy the peace in the city. The governor categorically denied that any government agency was involved in the murder and said that no effort will be spared in investigating this incident.

A press note issued in Karachi says seven persons were killed and eight others injured in incidents of violence in various parts of the city on the first day of the three-day strike announced by the Altaf Group over the killing of Altaf Hussain's brother and nephew. A partial strike was also observed in Sukkur where two vehicles were set ablaze.

Sri Lanka

President To Seek Political Solution to Crisis

LD0912065495 Tehran IRNA in English 0355 GMT 9 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] New Delhi, Dec. 8, IRNA — Sri Lankan President, Chandrika Kumaratunga, said that her government holds on to its earlier stand of "seeking a political solution to the ethnic crisis between minority Tamils and the majority Sinhalese of Sri Lanka."

Kumaratunga, speaking in a press conference in Colombo on Friday [8 December], dismissed the claims that her government following the massive success of the ongoing military operation to recapture Jaffna peninsula from Tamil rebels, has chosen to adopt a military solution to the crisis.

The Sri Lankan president added that the offer of sweeping autonomy to Tamil populated areas still remained.

However, she said, "we have to clear up certain areas of obstacle before presenting the package to a select committee of parliament."

The main opposition, United National Front (UNP) of Sri Lanka, has described the package as a 'sell out' to Tamils.

President Sets Conditions for Talks With LTTE

BK0912112295 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 9 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The government will talk peace with the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] only if it accepts the devolution package and agrees to a substantial surrender of arms, President Chandrika Kumaratunga said yesterday.

She told a special news conference at the Presidential Secretariat in Colombo that the government was willing to talk to the Tigers as well as all other Tamil parties.

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They should accept the package and agree to a substantial surrender of arms. She said that the LTTE had never been sincere about peace. Mrs. Kumaratunga said there has been no official response yet to the government's amnesty offer from the LTTE as an organization, but individuals continue to respond. She said that the government's immediate priority in the aftermath of Operation Riviresa [sunshine] was rehabilitating Jaffna and facilitating the resettlement of civilians. The establishment of the civil administration in Jaffna is an essential task. She stressed that the government had never wavered in its commitment to the devolution package and a political solution. However, it had been compelled to start a military campaign against forces which obstruct the course of peace.

LTTE Rebels Commit Suicide After Jaffna Clash

BK0912081695 Hong Kong AFP in English 0818 GMT 9 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Colombo, Dec 9 (AFP) — Rebel Tamil guerrillas trapped in their former bastion of Jaffna in northern Sri Lanka committed suicide after a failed bid to attack security forces, the military said Saturday [9 December].

Two rebels of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) opened fire and wounded two soldiers, then killed themselves by swallowing cyanide as they were cornered during a search operation, a military statement said.

"Troops recovered two rifles, a few hand grenades and a radio set," the statement said. It was the first confrontation between the army and the LTTE in Jaffna since the town was taken from the rebels a week ago.

The battle for Jaffna took nearly 50 days and claimed the lives of at least 508 security personnel and an estimated 1,925 rebels.

Officials said only about 3,000 people remained in Jaffna town while tens of thousands had fled even before the army could wrest control over the area. The refugees took shelter in the southern part of the Jaffna peninsula.

The LTTE, which had ruled Jaffna as the capital of a de facto state since 1990, have ordered civilians to remain in refugee camps and threatened them with death if they cross over to army controlled areas, Tamil sources said.

The government has said it wants the civilians to return home as the fighting had died down in Jaffna.

Radio on Suicide of Combatants

BK0912112795 Colombo LANKAPUVATH in English 1029 GMT 9 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Colombo, 9 Dec (LANKAPUVATH) — Around 1600 hours Friday [1030 GMT on 8 December], near St. Patrick's College in Jaffna town, LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] terrorists fired at troops injuring two soldiers. Later troops surrounded and searched the area.

Troops found bodies of two terrorists who had committed suicide by swallowing cyanide capsules and also recovered two rifles, few hand grenades, and a radio set. The two injured soldiers were admitted to the Palali military hospital, states a news release issued by the Operational Headquarters of the Ministry of Defence in Colombo.

LTTE Said Not Allowing Refugees To Return

BK0912105195 Colombo LANKAPUVATH in English 1023 GMT 9 Dec 95

[Report by Vavuniya District Correspondent P. Piyadasa]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Colombo, 9 Dec (LANKAPUVATH) — The LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] leaders are not allowing the Tamil refugees from Jaffna now in Kilinochchi to return home, the travellers from the north said.

The displaced civilians are now rearing to get back home to Jaffna where peace has returned. But LTTE leaders are holding them back for political reasons, according to these travellers, states Saturday's [9 December] 'DAILY NEWS.'

Tigers have also restricted civilian traffic to Vavuniya from Kilinochchi.

"Only those holding permits already issued by the LTTE are allowed to leave for Vavuniya. The Tigers have stopped issuing new permits," the travellers said.

However, about 200 Tamil families who were in Kilinochchi had escaped to Vavuniya recently, defying the Tiger ban, military sources said.

The refugees arriving in Vavuniya from the north are accommodated in the two camps run in the town and Sidambarampuram here. The latter camp alone is sheltering over 3,000 families.

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Police Commandos Launch New Offensive in East

BK1012080695 Hong Kong AFP in English 0630 GMT 10 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Colombo, Dec 10 (AFP) — Hundreds of heavily armed police commandos Sunday [10 December] fanned out from their camps in eastern Sri Lanka to launch fresh operations against Tamil Tiger guerrillas, officials here said.

The police Special Task Force [STF] commandos backed by the air force mounted the offensives in Panama, Maha Oya and Batticaloa areas and were moving against positions of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), officials said.

"There are limited scale operations going on in the east right now," chief military spokesman Sarath Munasinghe said. "The idea is to keep the terrorists on their toes."

There were no immediate reports of confrontations but the operations came three days after deputy defence minister Anuruddha Ratwatte said they were moving to attack Tamil Tiger targets in the east amid stepped up rebel attacks.

On Saturday, two opposition legislators narrowly escaped when LTTE gunmen opened fire at their van in the Batticaloa district, wounding two other passengers.

United National Party (UNP) MP Jayalath Jayewardena said his vehicle drove on despite being fired at by a group of Tiger rebels and sought help from army troops at a nearby camp.

"We drove about a kilometer (half a mile) with a flat tyre to reach the Sittandy army camp," Jayewardena said, adding that Tiger gunmen had also lobbed grenades at their vehicle.

Military officials had said that the LTTE was stepping up military pressure in the island's east following the loss of their northern bastion of Jaffna last week to the security forces.

Last week, the LTTE launched a kamikaze-style attack against an STF camp in the Batticaloa district, killing 23 commandos and six civilians for the loss of at least 28 of their own men.

President Chandrika Kumaratunga said her security forces will soon launch another major offensive to secure a land route to the Jaffna peninsula, hot on the heels of the army's success in taking the Jaffna after a 50-day offensive.

At least 508 security personnel and an estimated 1,925 Tiger guerrillas were killed during the offensive, regarded as the army's biggest ever operation against the LTTE.

Tiger guerrillas who are fighting for an independent homeland in the island's northeast had run Jaffna as the capital of their de facto state since 1990. More than 50,000 people have died in the homeland campaign since 1972.

Further on 'Major Offensive' in East

BK1012100795 Colombo LANKAPUVATH in English 0850 GMT 10 Dec 95

["LANKAPUVATH/OANA/Pool" item]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Colombo, Dec 10 (LANKAPUVATH) — Sri Lanka's security forces are launching a major offensive against the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] terrorists in the east.

Senior security sources told LANKAPUVATH Sunday [9 December] that the Tigers have heightened activity recently, particularly in the Batticaloa and Ampara districts, the last being a major suicide squad attack on the Special Task Force camp at Pudukudirippu, which was effectively repulsed with over 35 terrorists being killed.

The sources said that more troops are being poured in to the east in order to crush the LTTE led by deputy Tiger leader Karikalan as the terrorist organisation is trying, once more, to spread its tentacles particularly in these two districts.

The terrorists were particularly active in the rice bowl of Batticaloa and they will be chased out once again. Crack security force units including commandos and the air mobile brigade troops will be deployed to drive the terrorists away who are expected to retreat to the jungles of Thoppigala. However, this time round, the security forces have decided to strike hard at the terrorists even at Thoppigala, both by air and land and eliminate the Tiger threat once and for all, in these areas.

Army commander Lieutenant General Gerry de Silva told LANKAPUVATH that the LTTE is dreaming if it even thinks that it can regain control of the east and that they will be dealt with firmly, severely, and swiftly.

He stressed that the eastern campaign against tKTTE will, in no way, weaken the security forces current offe against the Tigers in Jaffna. Meanwhile, there were rep that sacked LTTE military wing leader in Batticaloa, Kna was roaming around eastern Sri Lanka, campaigning against th?TE and its leader Velupillai Prabhakaran.

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Official on Military Campaign To Destroy LTTE

BK1112060095 Colombo DAILY NEWS in English 11 Dec 95

[Report by Wimal Weeraratne in Kandy — received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] THE government and the security forces are relentlessly pursuing a military campaign to destroy the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam], which obstructs peace and to protect the country's unitary status, Deputy Defence Minister Col. Anuruddha Ratwatte said on Sunday [10 December].

He was addressing a public rally in Kandy, Sri Lanka's second largest city, to mark the historic victory of the Riviresa troops in Jaffna.

"Trained Soldiers were mostly confined to bunkers during the previous regime. The soldiers, now equipped with all the necessary military hardware, are destroying LTTE terrorism," he told the gathering. He predicted the premature demise of LTTE leader Velupillai Prabhakaran and other senior cadres.

He expressed his gratitude to President Chandrika Kumaratunga for providing political leadership to the victorious troops and to security forces personnel for bravely facing enemy fire to defend the motherland.

"We have allocated Rs.38 billion for this war next year. If not for the war, a part of this money could be spent on development," he said.

He stressed that a political solution should be evolved to the ethnic crisis. "The devolution package presented by the government will not divide the country. It will ensure the country's unitary status."

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